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H. WALTER BARNETT.

H.R.H. THE CROWN PRINCESS OF ROUMANIA.

Hyde Park Corner.



THE Journal for all interested in
Country Life and Country Pursuits

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THE PUBLIC HEALTH'S AMENDMENT BILL

POSSIBLY some of our readers may not be aware that this is the title of the Bill to amend the Model Building Bye-laws brought into the House of Lords last year and read a third time. Lord Hylton, who is now president of the Building Bye-laws Association, is going to reintroduce it this session, and it is hoped by those who have struggled so long to effect this necessary reform that it will receive the sanction of Parliament. The only objection raised is a friendly but, at the same time, a somewhat formidable one. This is that, instead of bringing in an amending measure, the time is now extremely opportune for a thorough reconsideration of the whole question. It is forty years since the Model Bye-laws were first drawn up, and the lapse of time would in itself justify a careful reconsideration of the subject. But this is the lightest of the considerations weighing with those who advocate a more drastic treatment. The period that has elapsed has been fruitful in scientific discovery of many kinds. Medical science especially has advanced enormously, owing in a large measure to the extended study of bacteriology, which may be said to have originated with the researches of M. Pasteur. That this has a very great bearing on the subject is a commonplace to every medical officer of health. When the original bye-laws were drawn up, the method by which the bacilli of various diseases were propagated and multiplied was not known nearly so well as to-day. That of tetanus is a familiar example; but even the conditions under which typhoid and kindred diseases were spread were not clearly apprehended. We are not assuming that all these matters have been exhaustively studied even now. Far from that, those who know most about it are the readiest to admit their ignorance. Still, a very great advance has been made, and it is safe to assume that if those who were instrumental in drawing up these regulations forty years ago were alive now, they would introduce drastic changes into them. The principles of sanitation are viewed in a clearer light than was possible in the sixties. More than that, the fact stares them in the face that, to some extent at least, the bye-laws have proved a failure. We do not go to the extreme length of saying that they have been entirely useless. Certain evils which were rampant in 1860 have been checked, and no one who has studied the subject will deny that the village dwelling-place of to-day is healthier than it was

forty years ago. We have the falling of the death-rate and a great diminution of epidemic diseases to prove it; so much may be cheerfully admitted. As a set-off against this advantage there are grave disadvantages. For one thing, the bye-laws have not operated against jerry-building; on the contrary, some of them encouraged it. Again, they have been hostile to invention and progress, resembling in this respect the grandmotherly rules of mediævalism. There is scarcely any other department of human activity in which enterprise and originality are more required than in architecture, and particularly in the designing of houses for the poor that will combine a maximum of healthy accommodation with a minimum of expense. But these absurd regulations, which meddle with a great many things that they had no right to meddle with, have repressed the ingenuity of the inventors. From this point of view, therefore, there is ample reason for advocating a radical and thorough-going reform.

Another argument in favour of the more drastic course lies in the circumstances of the time. We have in office at the moment a fresh and young Ministry containing a vast number of new and enthusiastic members who would be glad to take up any promising social reform. They will never become very excited over an Amendment Bill, because in its very nature this requires more knowledge of detail than of principles. But the production of an important Building Act would give them full scope for their eloquence and ability. It is inconceivable that under any circumstances such a measure should become a battle-ground of parties. It is non-political in its very nature, yet the reform can be commended to a philosophical Radical like Mr. Haldane, for instance, on the ground that it is founded chiefly upon the principle of liberty. Those who advocate the measure seek liberty to choose their own building materials, liberty to draw up their own designs and plans, and liberty to experiment with any promising invention offered them. They contend that nobody has any right to interfere so long as the exercise of individual freedom does not infringe upon the rights of other people. Even in a village no man has any right to make a pest-house of a cottage. But the limitation of freedom should always be as light as possible, whereas the original draughtsman of the Building Bye-laws seemed to think that there should be interference whenever and wherever it was possible. Again, it is agreed with practical unanimity that building bye-laws in their present form are a mistake. It would be much better to have a Building Act that would have the authority of Parliament behind it, and would apply over the length and breadth of the country.

Experience has shown that local authorities develop very little intelligence in dealing with adoptive bye-laws. The story of those that apply to rural districts vividly illustrates this. After a lengthened agitation the Rural Building Bye-laws were amended by the Local Government Board; but there seem to be throughout the length and breadth of the country district councils that never have heard of the change, or, at least, have not taken the trouble to adopt the new Model Bye-laws. It would be much better, therefore, to deprive them of any discretion in the matter. If a broad and, in the truest sense of the word, a liberal Act were passed through Parliament, it would be incumbent on all local bodies to obey it, and, at any rate, we should get rid of some of the confusion that exists to-day. At the moment it is not at all uncommon for two or three sets of building bye-laws to be in operation within a few yards of one another. We know of one place at least where a house that could not be built in a certain parish was put up within a stone's throw by simply crossing the boundary, while wedged in between the two is part of a district that has adopted no bye-laws. If ever there was an opportune moment for introducing such an Act, that moment is the present, because of the hundreds of new members in the House thoroughly pledged to social reform. Moreover, the Government is practically bound to bring in a Small Holdings Bill, which will necessitate the construction of a vast number of cottages and farmhouses, exactly the sort of dwellings whose construction has been interfered with by the Building Bye-laws. Those who are going to support Lord Carrington's schemes for binding the labourer to the soil would certainly lend a willing ear to proposals for thorough-going reform of the building regulations. Of course, it is asking a very great deal of Lord Hylton, Sir William Chance, and others who have most generously devoted time and labour to the promotion of the Bill now to be introduced; but they are entitled to the great credit of having educated Parliament to the requirements of the situation, and the work that has been done for the Public Health's Amendment Bill would not by any means be wasted if it paved the way for a wide-reaching Building Act.

Our Portrait Illustration.

OUR frontispiece this week is a portrait of H.R.H. the Crown Princess of Roumania. Her Royal Highness is the eldest daughter of the late Duke of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha, and married in 1893 H.R.H. Prince Ferdinand, Crown Prince of Roumania.



COUNTRY NOTES

THE appeal which Lord Roberts, as president of the National Service League, is causing to be widely circulated embodies the main lines of the policy of the league under two heads, the one being strictly military, with the view of providing us with a good striking arm for defence, and the other "to improve the moral and physical condition of the nation, and thereby increase its industrial efficiency." There are many Britons who consider the fleet sufficient in itself for purposes of national defence, and therefore do not look with favour, from that point of view, on any scheme of compulsory service or military training; but there can be but one opinion as to the utility of improving the moral and physical conditions of the mass of the people, and it is hardly to be doubted that some military discipline and exercise would be of much use to this end. In conjunction with this side of the question it is interesting to take the remarks of Mr. J. G. Legge, His Majesty's Inspector of Reformatory and Industrial Schools, and a member of the committee appointed to enquire into the physical deterioration of the urban population. The point that he made most strongly in a recent lecture delivered at the London Chamber of Commerce, and arranged by the Federation of Working Men's Social Clubs, was the value of open spaces and parks, as shown by the great superiority, both physical and mental, of suburban over urban children of the lower classes.

The present Parliament promises to be interesting in many ways, but in none more than the naive personal revelations of its members. One of the representatives of Labour has been plaintively bemoaning the fact that he finds it impossible to attend Westminster on an income of fifty shillings a week, and to an interviewer he has given many extremely interesting details of his expenditure. He does not apparently profess the doctrine of Mr. Eustace Miles, who recently published a small book to show that one can live healthily and comfortably on three-pence a day, or some infinitesimal sum like that. But why cannot Labour Members of Parliament do as students of Scottish Universities used to do, that is, work in their vacations and save the wherewithal for the session? Mr. John Burns, on the other hand, has been explaining to the House of Commons that one of the methods by which he shows his gratitude to a bountiful nation that gives him £2,000 a year is by devoting laborious nights, that is, time between 12 p.m. and 4 a.m., to studying the conditions under which the very destitute of London seek their "dosses." This will all make pleasant reading when the time comes for writing the biography of the Right Honourable John Burns, President of the Local Government Board.

With the arrival of March it may be said, in the words of the poet, "The blackbirds have their wills, the poets too." For now begins that warbling and twittering which foreshadows the busiest time of the year among our feathered friends. The earliest to burst into song are undoubtedly the thrushes; first the storm-cock, whose loud piping mixed with the Christmas carol, and then the smaller song-thrush. But on the lawns and along the hedgerows the little brown hedge-sparrow is choosing his mate and occasionally trilling his weak and thin little song. The cock chaffinch, looking bold and bright in the fresh reds and whites that the breeding season brings with it, is also singing his welcome song. The cock sparrows are fighting for mates in the hedgerows, and in many

a tall elm the rooks are holding the tournaments by which is to be decided who shall have the various brides that are indeed "dark and comely." On new-sown fields the partridge, now paired for the season, is running after his mate, though his companion in sport, the pheasant, has not yet turned his mind to these trifling and frivolous occupations. Every week now brings a new songster to the grove, and ere March shall have spent his charm, the music of the birds will be in full swing.

MARCH.

Sunlight blazons thee up the hill,
Birds in the bare wood call,
Herald thee home with bugles shrill,
Home to thy castle wall,
Tattered of banner, torn and bright,
Ragged from wind and wold,
Oh March, March, lover and lord of fight,
Come back to thy hold.

Loud on the hill-top harps the breeze,
Bells in the valley peal,
Nest their notes in the naked trees,
Harsh on the highways reel.
War's in the air, and war on earth,
Wind and war and a song,
Oh March, March, lover and lord of mirth,
And god of the strong.

March at the summit, hear a prayer,
Thine is the way I'd go,
Lavish my heart, thy fierce, and fair,
Wide is the world below.
Thine is the path a boy would tread,
Thine, where the fight is cast,
Oh March, March, pity my bended head,
And gather me fast.

H. H. BASHFORD.

As Professor Newton tritely remarks, the subject of migration brings us "face to face with perhaps the greatest mystery which the whole animal kingdom presents—a mystery which . . . can in its chief point be no more explained by the modern man of science than by the simple-minded savage or the poet or prophet of antiquity." Nevertheless, there is no reason why we should regard the solution of this mystery as impossible. The difficulty of the problem, indeed, should stiffen our determination to unravel it. In this country much work has already been done towards this end by Mr. W. Eagle Clarke and others; and this is now to be continued in even greater detail by the British Ornithologists' Club. A specially-appointed committee began what will undoubtedly eventually prove to be a most important series of observations on the arrival and dispersal of the summer migrants over the country.

Permission was obtained from the Elder Brethren of the Trinity to distribute schedules among the lighthouse-keepers along the coasts of England and Wales, wherein they were to record the observations, supplementing them by the wings of the birds killed at the lanterns; while a large number of schedules were also distributed among willing helpers throughout the country. Altogether, 15,000 observations resulted from last year's work, and these have now been analysed and presented in the form of a report, which should be diligently studied by all who are interested in this fascinating problem. It is to be obtained, we may remark, of Messrs. Witherby and Co., 326, High Holborn, London, or of Mr. J. L. Bonnote, the hon. secretary, 3, Hanover Square, London, W., on whom much of the work has fallen. It was decided, for this year at least, to limit the enquiry to the arrival at and dispersal throughout England and Wales only of some thirty strictly migratory species which winter abroad and nest within these limits. The species selected were the warblers, wagtails, swallows, swift, nightjar, wryneck, cuckoo, and about a dozen other species which need not be enumerated here.

Briefly, the results of this year's work show that the immigrations take place in a series of waves, stragglers preceding and following the main body. It would seem that the main points of arrival were Sussex and Hampshire, while Devon and Dorset came next, and then Kent. By the aid of maps the distribution of each species over the country after its arrival can easily be followed; and herein lies the great feature of the present enquiry. From these maps it is manifest that, in the case of a number of species, Wales and the Western and North-Western Counties of England were populated before the Eastern and North-Eastern Counties. We are glad to say that at the last meeting of the club it was decided to continue this work over a series of years on the same lines as those followed in the report. After, say, five years a comparison of these maps of distribution should yield a rich harvest of facts, as well as, probably, many surprises.

This report, however, contains a vast amount of detailed and most valuable information on the different species which, from consideration of space, we cannot deal with here. But the spring is upon us, and as surely there will come with it the same orderly procession of our feathered visitants. Among our readers there are, we know, many who are keenly interested in these arrivals, and the report, for many, will prove a very delightful revelation, and, perchance, gain new helpers for this great work.

The new Parliament will presumably be altogether too busy to be able to give time to such a matter as the protection of wild birds; but that the present situation needs amending there can be no doubt. On the one hand, with the growth of the popular interest in Nature, the outcry is constantly increasing against those—whether collectors, gamekeepers, or “sportsmen”—who persist in killing every specimen of a rare bird that they come across. On the other hand, and much more serious, is the gathering wrath of the agriculturist who suffers from the depredations of birds which are too common and too much protected. As an example of the former there is the instance cited in our “Wild Country Life” lately of the collector—a gentleman—who spent five days on the Norfolk Broads and rejoiced in the “luck” which enabled him in that time to kill four specimens of the bearded tit. Such an action seems to need no comment. Of examples of the complaints of the agriculturist, we shall soon have enough now that the fruit trees are coming into bud. That the situation is unsatisfactory there can be no question.

A suggestion is made by a correspondent that a good deal would be achieved if the Wild Birds' Protection Act were cast in precisely the opposite form to which it is at present—that is, if, instead of making a laborious list of the birds that are protected, it was provided that it shall be illegal to kill any bird except—then follows a list. So far as the killing of the rare birds is concerned, the change ought to be of benefit, because it is precisely the rarest that are too often forgotten and omitted; while there is always the plausible excuse for the gunner who sees a bird that is new to him that he did not know what it was, and, even if he had an idea, he could not remember whether it was protected or not. There could be no such excuse if the prohibition were general. On the other hand, the birds which were specifically mentioned as killable would, as it were, be marked out for everybody's destruction. In proportion as it is worse for a man to be put on a black list than it is to be merely omitted from a list of the privileged, so a bird catalogued as explicitly outside the pale of mercy would assuredly be more certainly marked out for slaughter than one which was merely not included in a list of the immune. Even the village boy would remember that he was allowed, nay invited, to kill rooks, wood-pigeons, starlings, sparrows, blackbirds, and bullfinches (with such few more as may be necessary), though he may be quite incapable of carrying in his head the long list of those birds which he may not touch, with the very names of the majority of which, even after every effort has been made to give the local names of each, he is totally unfamiliar. What is needed is, to give as much protection as possible to the rare and harmless birds which we can ill spare, and at the same time to concentrate all possible odium on those which are unquestionably harmful.

We have considerable sympathy with those who are protesting against the formation of a kind of Zoological Garden in the New Park at Hampstead. It is very difficult to get the London public to understand that under all circumstances there is something cruel in the caging of wild animals. The Zoo itself has become endeared to the town by long association, and he would indeed be a rash reformer who advocated its abolition. But leaving it alone is one thing, and advocating the extension of the practice of showing confined animals to holiday-makers is very different. It is far better to teach them, especially the young, to seek and find that exquisite pleasure which comes from watching and listening to wild creatures. The idea at Hampstead seems to be to enclose a number of deer within a very confined space, and a more flagrant example of the evils of the menagerie can scarcely be thought upon. The deer, whose sinews have been trained to the wild gallop for centuries, during which its safeguard alike from man and its natural enemies lay in its legs, could not possibly be happy in an enclosure, and to look at it could only give pleasure to those who find their delight in keeping such birds as larks, cuckoos, and nightingales tame, a thing which is an atrocity to the lover of Nature.

While there must be very few who do not know the excellent work which Sir John Bennet Lawes did for agriculture at Rothamsted, it must be news to many that the originator of the great experimental farm lived in a house so beautiful and full of interest. Yet the articles of which we publish the third

to-day, demonstrate this fact to the uttermost. Sir John was not only a great chemist and agriculturist, but like another who performed great service to English husbandry, namely, Arthur Young, he was possessed of a fine taste and a genuine love for what was old, qualities which we may say are fully inherited by his son, the present owner of Rothamsted. When we come to think of it it is evident that the place must have been an ideal one for a man of his taste and habits. As the late Mr. Seeborn showed, the county of Hertfordshire contains many records of the ancient manorial system of England, and is, in truth, one of the pleasantest and most diversified of English shires. With a fine old house to live in, beautiful landscapes around, fascinating objects of antiquity to study, and an experimental farm, in which he could find both pleasure and profit, the late Sir John Bennet Lawes must have been a man to be envied.

March 1st was noteworthy as the day on which facilities for travelling in London and the suburbs were introduced. On that day the Great Central Railway began a new system of trains which practically brings a fresh region within range of what is called Greater London. At the same time the District Railway started a two-minute service to expedite the travelling of its passengers, and the London United Tramways Company opened its Kingston, Surbiton, and Long Ditton routes. It would also appear as though the electric train and motor-omnibus were the destined instruments for overcoming the congestion of London, and counterbalancing the bad effects of the rural exodus. As all these enterprises are started not from benevolent purposes, but on purely business lines, it may be assumed that they form the answer to a popular demand. One is somewhat sceptical, however, of its continuance. When all is said and done there is a very great saving of time and other conveniences when a man lives near his work, whether he be of the labouring, middle, or professional class. In the United States many years ago there arose a great movement on the part of commercial men towards living far away from their offices, but it came to be, to a considerable extent, given up because of the time necessarily wasted in the long railway journeys. One result of the present movement in London is shown by the number of “lets” that are up in some parts of the town. Should it go on it is evident that London houses will soon become very cheap.

TO A YOWE.

There's a tremur in thy bleat, but ha' no veer,
Haarm shasn't coom to 'ee time I be near.
Be zettled down an' air thy mother's pride
An' tend thuck ball o' wool nigh to thy zide—
Thuck tiny lambkin shiverun' at thy zide.

On such a morn to bring thy babe to town,
Wi' shearp wind drivun' and snaw flutterun' down,
I well can mind the cause o' ael thy veer,
Thine anxious eye, the tremblun' bleat I hear!
But keep 'ee zettled in thy pen, poor dear,—
Haarm shasn't coom to 'ee time I be near.

Bide 'ee contented through these tryun' hours,
The springtime zun'll zoon azzurt 'is powers
An' zmile on vields o' green ael vlecked wi' vlowers.
Then will thy lamb its gambolun' pranks employ,
In playful innocence an' babby joy,
To vex an' please 'ee ael the long day through
And claim thy mother's love an' carun' too!
Cheer 'ee poor heart, and just contented bide
And tend thuck treasure shiverun' at thy zide.

W. J. W.

The idea of a return to transport by means of barges along our canals will sound to most people in the twentieth century a little retrogressive, but, in point of fact, a good deal more traffic than the majority are likely to suppose is being carried on by the canals at the present time, and has been so carried all through the years since canals were recognised as the main channels. A barge fitted with an internal-combustion engine, made by Messrs. Thornycroft, the gas to drive the engine being produced by the passage of steam through a coke or coal furnace on the “Capitaine” system, has lately made an experimental trip of some 500 miles on the canals between London and Manchester. Besides carrying its own cargo of eleven tons weight, this motor-barge acted as a tug for several other barges of the common type, and it is claimed that the voyage sufficiently demonstrated the great superiority of this mode of conveyance in point of economy over either steam or horse drawn traffic by land. It is also said to have shown, as we may believe very easily, that these waterways stand in great need of dredging and cleansing in order to clear them of the accumulated dirt and rubbish of the many years in which the facilities of transport that they furnish have been so much neglected.

THE PRINCE'S DUCHY.

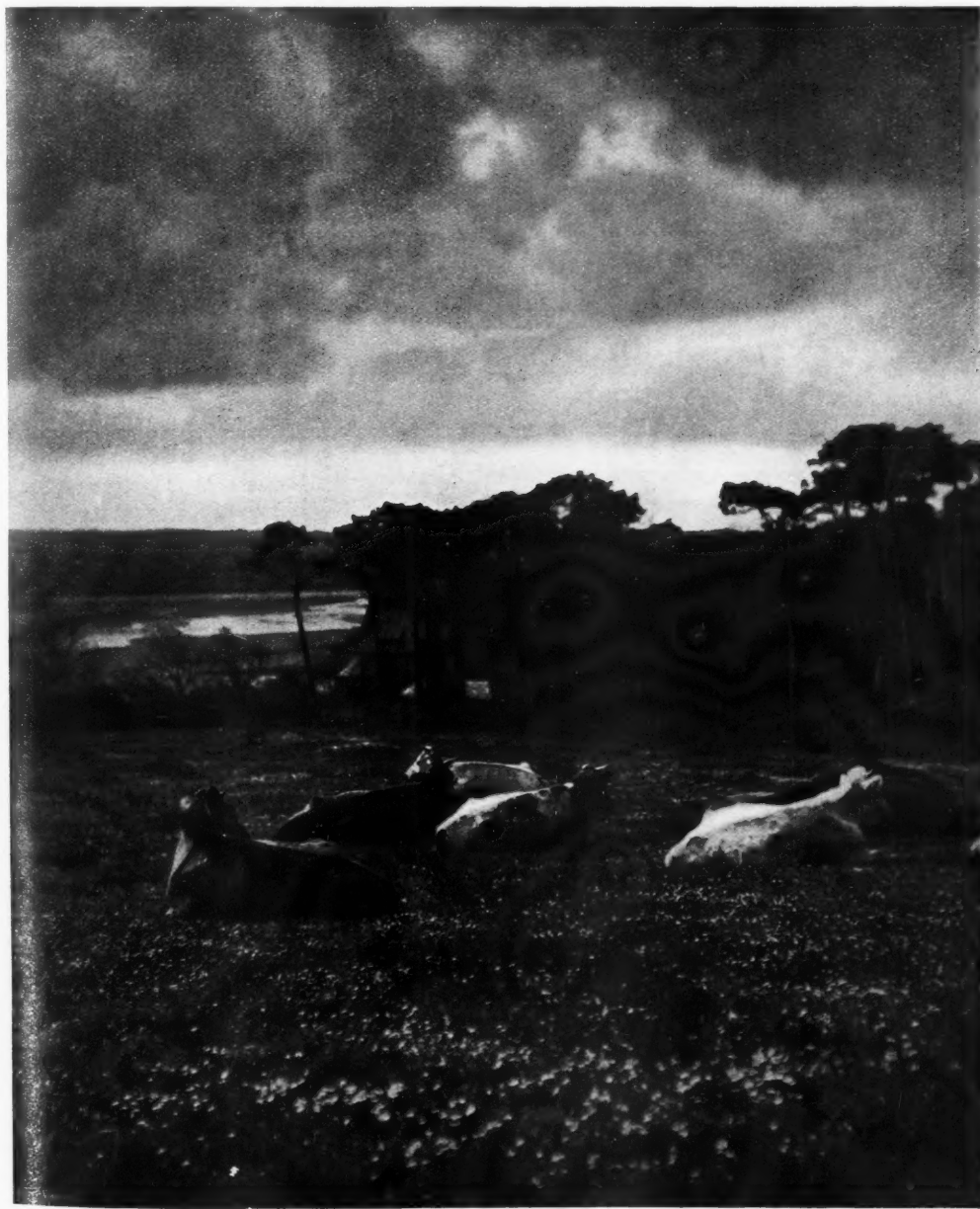
AS the train slides through the peaceful landscape all the waning afternoon, you shall presently become aware of a subtle change in the aspect of the shining uplands and the lucent arch of the sky. It is as if an invisible frontier had been crossed, and green England, with its chess-board of hedged fields, its clusters of red cottages, its village steeples embossed with trees, and here and there the grey mill beside the pool, were left behind. For Cornwall is not England. We all know the story of the Phœnicians, and how they traded to the land of Cassiterides, bringing tin from thence; and how the spirits of the old Jews who worked the mines still inhabit those depths by Marazion town—Marah Zion, the bitterness of Zion—so that the miners hear the ghostly knocking of their picks to this day. When the Romans left the land, King Arthur ruled in Cornwall; then the Saxons came, and Athelstan conquered it. Edward III. first made a duchy of Cornwall—once a kingdom—and gave it to the Black Prince; and ever since the duchy has been an appanage of the Princes of Wales. Briton and Roman and Saxon came and passed, and the Norman came, and the English were a nation; and still Cornwall, the cape of rock jutting into the Atlantic, is not England. It is a foreign land, and still it is home. There are many who travel south, to the Riviera, to Egypt, who would fare as well in warmth and comfort in the dulcet and slumbrous air, the flowery valleys, the sheltered havens of the Prince's Duchy.

Apart from its obvious superficialities, the value of any place soever depends upon the amount of knowledge and of insight which the traveller brings with him. He will see only what he is enabled by previous knowledge to perceive. He carries his own atmo-

sphere, and contemplates the world in his private mirror. That is but another way of describing the power of perception. The terms are convertible. As to what is really there, we shall never know. Fortunately, we have only to do with things as we see them. If that be not the true vision, it is at least true to us; and who shall dispute its veracity? There is, first of all, the outward appearance of the place, its form and colour, its quality of sunlight, its dimness of dull weather, its depth of night beneath the far procession of the stars. Here is a book, we think, in which all may read and be content; and yet even here we must distinguish. There are degrees in the powers of perception. The painter will see more at a glance, with that intent, close-lidded gaze of his, than you or I would discern in a day's march. For he has been trained to see, taught to analyse, to decipher. Hence it is that pictures show us that which we could not ourselves perceive; and again—so strange a thing is art—even in studying a jewelled canvas, we cannot see all that it presents. Yet the painter is a man like another; he differs from the rest of the world not in kind, but in degree, else would his pictures be to other men no more than smeared surfaces, even as they appear to animals. Each of us has something of the painter's quality, something of his pleasure; let us rest content with that. We are all in quest of pleasure, all hungry for the magic fruit whose juice allays the fever of the world—that is the secret of the matter. There are golden apples in the Prince's Dukedom. Painter and historian, poet and teller of tales—it is all one—like the faithful servants in the fairy stories, help us to gather them. And the henchman to whom we must needs, perhaps, owe the greatest service is the teller of tales. For the most of us, it may be, are better

acquainted with this art (of all arts the most ancient) than with the rest. For he opens the Way of Escape. *Ita in antiquam silvam.* This world is a good place enough, for a healthy body; but there are times when it is too much with us; and if the Ivory Gates were shut, the air would darken about us, like the tainted air of a prison.

See, as the train speeds westward, the whole tract of golden upland sweeps to a high sharp skyline, and beyond the void is filled with light. Upon a headland thrust from the wall of rock that verges upon the Atlantic is the home and birthplace of the English epic. You shall leave the train to step into the sudden profound tranquillity, the keen soft air, of the remote country-side; to drive swiftly down roads of stone, between rock walls and gleaming mounds of shale and slate, with here and there the ruined buildings of a disused mine, to the sea. Beyond Tintagel village the high sharp skyline darkens upon the coloured west. The road turns coastwise, and a track leads down a wooded cleft, filled with the greyness of twilight, and murmurous with the noise of waves. High on the left hand towers a green rock, set with blocks and masses of broken masonry, all that is left of the strong walls of the castle of Tintagel. It is wholly silent, secret, and utterly solitary, looming upon the far, clear sky, wrapt in the solemn veil of the thickening darkness. The air is charged with the muffled voices of the sea. Surely the place is alive with—what? Gaze into the spectral and shadowed dimness of the hillside—did nothing move? Is there not a far sound of cries, a call mingled with the wash and thunder of



W. Thomas.

ON A CORNISH PASTURE.

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POLPERRO.

Copyright.



W. Thomas.

A DAY OF REST.

Copyright.

the waves—is there no stir in the quiet air? . . . All the old, unhappy far-off things, all the splendour and the fury—all are clean vanished into the irrevocable past, all done and dead. The same sea beats upon the rock, the same stars wheel about its head; and the puny generations of man arise and fall into dust, as the leaves that whisper in your ears, even now. And yet, from

And so by means King Uther sent for this duke, charging him to bring his wife with him, for she was called a fair lady, and a passing wise, and her name was called Igraine.

So begins the "Morte D'Arthur," the English epic. King Uther loved Igraine, and laid siege to the castles of the Duke of Tintagil, who was slain in a sudden onfall, and thereafter Uther



W. Thomas.

WAITING FOR THE BOATS COMING IN.

Copyright.

century to century, each generation adds a little fuel to the eternal fire, whose clear flame lights the altar of their remembrance.

It befell in the days of Uther Pendragon, when he was king of all England, and so reigned, that there was a mighty duke in Cornwall that held war against him long time. And the duke was called the Duke of Tintagil.

married Igraine, and her son became King Arthur of Britain, a champion of Christendom. Merlin the witch had a hand in these matters. Sir Ulfius met Merlin, who was clad "in a beggar's array," somewhere in these valleys, and brought him to King Uther. There is still a mystery concerning Arthur's birth. When

King Arthur sought Guinevere, the daughter of King Leodogran, to wife, her father strove, as a prudent parent, to resolve that mystery. Queen Bellicent, wife of King Lot of Orkney, told Leodogran what she had heard from Blegs, Merlin's master :

. . . that himself
And Merlin ever served about the king,
Uther, before he died, and on the night
When Uther in Tintagil past away
Moaning and wailing for an heir, the two
Left the still King, and passing forth to breathe,
Then from the castle gateway by the chasm
Descending thro' the dismal night . . .

Dropt to he cove, and watched the great sea fall,
Wave after wave, each mightier than the last,
Till last, a ninth one, gathering half the deep
And full of voices, slowly rose and plunged
Roaring, and all the wave was in a flame :
And down the wave and in the flame was borne
A naked babe, and rode to Merlin's feet,
Who stoopt and caught the babe, and cried "The King !
Here is an heir for Uther !"

above them ; and far out at sea, the sailors set their course by the mark of the grey church tower. Like the land of whose ribs they are built, the Cornish churches bear a stern, square plainness of outward aspect, but within they are wrought in a rich fantasy. Seldom shall you find so excellent a contrast. In the heart of the stone hills and the wide grim uplands heaving upon a vast grey cope of sky, lush valleys blossom, and deep woods are brodered thick with daffodils. For spring, stepping delicately northward, touches first the black, moist earth of the Scilly Islands, and in her footprints grows great wealth of flowers, and then she passes into combe and valley, purpling the rich meadows, and filling wood and orchard with her fragrance. All the summer the strong sun smiles upon the uplands, and drenches the valleys in slumbrous radiance, ripening the laden trees. The rigours of a northern winter, tempered by the warm west wind, fall lightly in this favoured land, and sheltered flowers bloom all the year round. An idle land, if you would be idle, where you may breathe the very air of ancient magic, of old tales and legends, and walk amid the immemorial relics of a long tumultuous history, whose troubles are all composed by the



Miss. Turnbull.

HERALDS OF SPRING.

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The chasm whence the two wizards issued upon that stormy night gapes to the left of you, and below, in the steep-sided cove, the night wind whistles upon the crags, and the Atlantic rollers break at your feet in lines of spume that tremble upon the stones and swiftly vanish into air. It is a fairy night, a magic hour, when all things are credible, and real and unreal are one. Why not, since the epic history of Arthur and his valiant following makes an enduring part of the great inheritance of our race?

The whole land of the Duchy is strewn with memorials of the ancient dead: barrow and tumulus, magic circle and cromlech, broken castle and green earthwork. Here is the handiwork of Briton and Saxon, Norman and Englishman; the dumb signs of vanished races, testifying that they, too, lived their little hour, and fought and married and toiled and took their ease before they passed into silence. And still the vigorous tide of English life throbs in town and valley and mine, lone farmstead and busy fishing haven. The sea beats upon two coasts, and generation after generation of stout fishermen get their bread upon the waters, passing one by one to the churchyard on the bare hill. There they lie, and the sea wind sighs in the pale rank grass

mighty hand of time, and fall beneath the perpetual spell of a unique and homely beauty. L. COPE CORNFORD.

THE UNIVERSITY HOCKEY MATCH.

CAMBRIDGE are to be heartily congratulated on the result of the hockey match with Oxford which took place at Surbiton on February 21st. Cambridge had not previously won this match since the year 1901. Oxford, as it happened, were handicapped by the failure of two of their best men, Butterworth and Rounds, but nevertheless, Cambridge had no walk over. It is probable that the somewhat moist condition of the ground suited their style of play. The turf can scarcely be said to have been in its best condition, and, indeed, that was impossible, after the weather we have been experiencing during the last part of January and the beginning of February; but the weather was all that could be desired. Oxford



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THE CAMBRIDGE GOAL-KEEPER SAVING.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

began very well, and their forward play during the first half of the game left very little to be desired. When the bully-off took place a large crowd had assembled, and the play for a quarter of an hour afterwards was fast and brilliant, with Oxford appearing to have the upper hand all

swift? No; it is the chaffinch; and the poet who can find nothing better to say about the "merry chaffinch" deserves to be—as completely despised as Montgomery has come to be. The chaffinch is not *perpetuum mobile*, but, on the contrary, has a large share of the camel's capacity for standing still. Not, perhaps, containing much more Nature, but at least

£500. The same correspondent sent another despatch not long afterwards on which the tolls were close upon £2,000; but that was an epoch-making message, and the proprietors of the paper got, I think, their money's worth. On the other hand, 30s. was, perhaps, a lot to pay for the information, however interesting in itself, about camels.

THE MISAPPREHENDED CHAFFINCH.

What has reminded me of the camel incident at the moment is the coming across an exasperating passage in Montgomery's poems:

"I'm the *perpetuum mobile* of birds,
My days are running, rippling,
twittering, streams;
When fast asleep, I'm broad awake
in dreams."

And can anyone guess what bird it is that the poet considers the *perpetuum mobile*? The blue tit perhaps, or the wren, the siskin, the wagtail or the



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WITHIN SHOOTING DISTANCE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

the time. Cambridge so far had acted on the defensive, but after the first quarter the side changed their tactics and gave a fine display. A considerable number of penalties were imposed for sticks, and more than one foul took place during the course of the game. By universal consent the best half-backs on the field were Mr. A. M. Horsfall and Mr. L. M. Robinson. Altogether the match was one of very great interest, and a much more lively one to witness than that of last year.

pleasanter reading, even if a trifle sloppy in its versification, is Cowper's tale of two chaffinches that built a nest in the mast of a ship and were carried out to sea:

"The mother bird is gone to sea,
As she had changed her kind;
But goes the male? Far wiser, he
Is doubtless left behind."

WILD COUNTRY LIFE.

CAMELS AND CHAFFINCHES AND THINGS.

THE camel has an unusual capacity for standing still, especially in the same spot." That has always seemed to me one of the funniest sentences ever written, not merely on its merits as a sentence, but because it occurred in a despatch sent by a well-known war-correspondent for a London daily from the front, during the Afghan War of 1878, every word of which cost either 3s. or 3s. 6d. (I forget which) in telegraph tolls. Omitting some of the superfluous minor words, that sentence cost the newspaper something over 30s.; and it was part of a message the tolls on which amounted to some



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CAMBRIDGE CLEARING.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

No! Soon as from the shore he saw
The winged mansion move,
He flew to reach it, by a law
Of never-failing love.
Then perching at his consort's side,
Was briskly borne along;
The billows and the blast defied,
And cheered her with his song."

Whether the incident in itself is true or not, I believe that is just what a male chaffinch would do; not from any mere blind instinct (and how angry some naturalists will be with me for saying so!), but because he is, above all things, the gentleman among our small birds.

HIGH AND LOW SOCIETY.

Other birds there are which have traces of breeding. It would be absurd to call the robin ill-bred, but he is, after all, "the rustic robin"; nor can one imagine the mouse-like hedge-sparrows doing a bad-mannered thing, but they are at best the curates and old maids of birddom. Sparrows are mere canaille—proletariat. Tits, for all their engaging manners, have too much of the buffoon in them to belong to the best society; while larks, in spite of their aspirations, remain groundlings, and yellow-hammers, who really might do better, cling to their low preference for hedgerows and muddy ditches. Among the finches themselves, the greenfinch is beyond doubt low-born—his beak and legs proclaim it—while the sporting tastes of the bullfinch put him outside the pale. He would, if he could, wear diamonds in his shirt-front. There remains the goldfinch—dilettante and aristocrat, certainly, but such a frivolous creature of fashion, all frills and furbelows, that when he flutters above a thistle clump or bunch of cornflowers one really hardly knows for a space whether he be bird or butterfly. But look at the chaffinch as he steps along the gravel path! Is it his walk or his crest, or the admirable taste of his clothes—so gay without being gaudy—that makes him such a gentleman as he is? *Perpetuum mobile*, indeed! *Nobis*, perhaps.

AN AUGURY OF SPRING.

It is the pairing of the chaffinches that constitutes perhaps the most conspicuous augury of the coming of spring. It may be because they are such noticeable birds in themselves; but more probably it is the result of their habit of splitting up into flocks of the sexes during winter. One is always glad to see a male and female chaffinch in each other's company again. The chaffinch is often late in building—his nest is too easily found if made before any leaves are on the trees—and he does not begin his spring song (albeit it has already been reported as heard this year, and may, indeed, be heard on rare occasions even in December) so early as the thrushes and some

other birds. But he gives up his bad bachelor ways of the winter and goes "to join the ladies" at the first hint that the year has turned. Just now there are still wisps of the single sexes to be seen, but they are small compared to those flocks that set whole hedgerows in a whirr a month ago; while pairs are to be seen on every hand.

THE EARLY MARCH HARE.

And this morning I saw a hare already smitten with March madness. When I first caught sight of him he was sitting up in the stubble thinking of nothing in particular, when he remembered a pressing engagement on the other side of the ten-acre field. He ran some yards with prodigious haste, and stopped so suddenly that he turned a complete somersault. Picking himself up, he forgot which way he was going, and tore back precisely to his starting-place even faster than he had left it; and there he dropped, in mid-stride, into what looked like sleep of the profoundest. The slumber lasted for some ten seconds, when he began to jump, not of his own volition, but as if, with an unseen cord tied round his middle, he was being jerked by some invisible hand from above. Such grotesque and unimaginable saltations! Till, without warning, that confounded engagement came into his head again; but this time it was in the other direction, and in ten leaps he was through the hedge and out of sight. It is presumably the same spring madness as sets all Nature to new antics in love-making time—"the jinking hares in amorous whids," Burns says, somewhere; and certainly the hare to-day did jink—with jinks of the highest.

UNKIND ST. VALENTINE.

But even while the hares are jinking and lambs are coming on for a month old, when the birds are mostly paired and have begun to turn their thoughts to house-making, when along the bottom of every hedgerow a sprouting carpet of the new year's greenery is coming up in patches, it is pathetic that now, well along in February, the wild things should, for the first time this winter, be feeling the stress of hard weather. In the first few days of January, indeed, things looked serious for a space, but only in mid-February has real hardship come, with nearly two weeks of alternate frosts and snows and sleet, and only a half thaw where the sun falls towards mid-day to keep the ice from bearing. Now for the first time the starlings have been sitting, puffy balls in the wind-swept trees, waiting for any scraps of food that may be thrown from the house. The fieldfares sit droop-winged and seemingly half torpid till the human being comes close up to them, and even the redwing has joined the thrushes and blackbirds and the host of smaller fry that come to share our hospitality on the lawn. Goodness knows what St. Valentine has been thinking of; but certain it is that, as in so many recent years, February has been our real winter month, and the month that, after January sunshine had tricked them into preparations for the spring, has been hardest on the wild things.

H. P. R.

"FORTY-BAGS."

By M. E. FRANCIS.

MARY DOYLE was the head laundry-maid at a certain big rambling Irish country house. The laundry over which she reigned supreme was a two-storied building adjoining the stables. The bleaching-green was opposite; a little to the right it was raised to the level of the ironing-room on the upper floor, and was reached by a flight of stone steps. A very wonderful, mysterious, beautiful place was this bleaching-green—at least in the eyes of the children of the house, who used to clasp each other's hands very tightly, and follow Mary with awe-stricken faces on the rare occasions when she permitted them to ascend to it; for the entrance was guarded by a rusty gate, and Mary kept the key in her pocket. But once on the top of those dark steps, how marvellous was the prospect! The fair inclined plain of sunlit green, which went sloping upwards to such a height that, when one had climbed to the top, one could look over the stable roof and into the yard; the clumps of flowering bushes—lilacs, laburnums, syringas, blossoming thorns, all blooming in lonely beauty, for no one was so much as allowed to finger a leaf of these sacred groves; and behind a copse more mysterious still, a dense growth of hazel and elder and laurel. Mary usually stood stock still in the midst of her domain, while the children clung together and whispered.

She was a tall, strong, high-shouldered woman, with a hard-featured face, and iron-grey hair, which every year retreated more and more under her black chenille net; for in spite of her plain face and stooping form Mary was vain, and exceedingly touchy on the question of her years. She was close upon sixty, and never would own to more than half her years; indeed, when the census collector came his round, she boldly sent in her age as twenty-nine. She was given, moreover, to hinting distantly at certain romantic episodes in her career, and even to suggest darkly and with increased severity of aspect that it might not be too late yet, and that maybe she'd be takin' everyone by surprise wan of these days—but no matter!

Her fellow-servants laughed at her, but behind her back, and the children tittered, too, when they heard their nurses discuss old Mary's prospects of establishing herself in life, and opine that he must be an elegant sort of young man who would take up with her. But they were very respectful in Mary's presence, for she shared with the doctor and the sweep the bugbear honours of the nursery. If, as occasionally happened, somebody's cup

"leaked over the top" and spoiled a clean table-cloth, young Sir or Miss was immediately threatened with the wrath of Mary Doyle. If white frocks were damaged or pinafores soiled the culprit was asked, "What would Mary Doyle say?"

As a matter of fact, Mary Doyle usually said a good deal; she was afflicted with a mysterious and long-standing complaint called "heart-scalding," spasms of which used to attack her after such delinquencies. On Saturday mornings, sometimes, she used to lead the children with a damp and crinkly hand to the ironing-room, where piles of their own small garments lay ready to be conveyed to the house. There were four little girls in that house, and one boy, still small enough to be in petticoats—and they all wore white—donning clean clothes every day before dinner. Imagine, therefore, the mountains of starched frocks, the stacks of carefully-ironed pinafores, not to speak of underwear of all denominations, on which Mary and her underlings had bestowed their labours.

"And to think that the whole of them 'ull be comin' back to me again dirty!" Mary would exclaim, tragically. "I declare the heart is scalded out of me."

Feeling like small criminals, the children would creep down the stairs, and out through the laundry proper, with its steamy, soapy smell, its row of stooping figures, and, in the corner under the table, Spot, curled up in his bed, asleep. Spot was a small white terrier, with the most beautiful little head in the world; but with a figure—well, when it is mentioned that Mary daily provided him with a bowlful of food large enough to sustain a mastiff, further comment on Spot's figure is unnecessary. He was an ill-tempered little fellow, and would growl and snap savagely at anyone incautious enough to approach his bed—always excepting Mary, whose proximity invariably threw him into a wriggling ecstasy of delight.

This allusion to Spot brings me to my story proper, for it was owing to Spot's unwilling generosity that "Forty-Bags" came to put his trust in Mary Doyle. The dinner hour was just over; the yard-bell had clanged out its summons to gardener and ploughboy. Spot, sitting upright in his bed, had just finished the series of long-drawn howls with which he invariably protested against the bell-ringing in question, and Mary Doyle, with Spot's bowl piled even higher than usual, was slowly advancing from the kitchen premises to her own, when she caught sight of "Forty-Bags" leaning against the yard wall.

"Forty-Bags" was a beggar-man well known in the district, teased, tolerated, and regularly supported by a number of humble patrons. He made his rounds with the utmost regularity, receiving alms, indeed, from the big houses, but halting more frequently by cabin doors. A sack half full of potatoes hung over his shoulder now—one of the many which were festooned round his person. It was, indeed, this fact that earned him his title of "Forty-Bags," though he was sometimes called "Lord John," for he had a way of bragging about his aristocratic connections. He was a tall old fellow, with a ragged beard and a glittering eye, a face browned and weather-beaten till it resembled leather, and attire consisting of layers of tatters of every conceivable shape and hue, comprising, amongst the rest, a fragment of red waistcoat of which he was inordinately proud. He was believed to be an "innocent," and acted up to the character, talking in a wild rhodomontade, and cutting strange capers. His advent was invariably hailed with delight, and folks would laugh till they held their sides at "Forty-Bags'" antics.

Mary stood still a moment to survey him sourly, and noted how the labourers were gathering round him, though the bell had stopped, and work should have been resumed for the afternoon.

"Won't ye jig a bit for us to-day, Lord John?" cried one.

"Do now, yer lordship," urged another. "Sure there's nobody hereabouts can hold a candle to ye at the double."

"Will I hold yer sack for ye, Forty-Bags?" exclaimed an officious garden boy.

Forty-Bags clutched the sack in question, dealing out a left-hander to the lad, which sent him staggering back.

"Troth, I believe it's full of gould it is!" cried the youngster, no whit abashed.

The others closed round the old man, laughing, jeering, endeavouring by every means to provoke him either to his usual flow of eloquence, or to the fantastic performance with which he usually regaled them. But he would not be drawn. He grinned vacantly, nodded, asserted in muffled tones that it was altogether too hot for the dancin'; finally, catching sight of Mary and her bowl of provender, he sidled towards her, enquiring what he'd be doin' leppin' an' heatin' himself, when herself over beyant was afther bringin' him out such an elegant lot o' vittles.

"Hothin' indeed!" retorted Mary. "I've somethin' else to be doin' nor attendin' on the likes o' you."

But Forty-Bags, circling round her with a curious staccato step, and sundry uncanny twitchings of both face and person, jerked the bowl from her grasp.

"God bless ye!" he remarked fervently, as he hastened away with it. "Sure ye wouldn't be givin' it to a dog when ye have a Christian famishin' for want of it."

Mary eyed him coldly and, turning, went slowly back to the house for a fresh supply; and the steward, arriving at the same moment, broke up the little group, who were vociferously cheering the beggar. When Miss Doyle reappeared, the yard was deserted with the exception of Forty-Bags himself, who was seated on one of Mary's window-sills with the bowl beside him, the contents of which were rapidly vanishing. As she approached he looked up penitently, yet with a twinkle in his eye.

"I 'umbly ax your pardon, Mum," he said, "but 'twas starved out an' out I was."

"Dear knows I don't begrudge it ye," said Mary, relaxing in some measure.

"I'm starved out an' out," repeated the old man, "an' tired—God knows it's tired I am."

Mary's face resumed its severity.

"Ye had a right to give over leppin' an' jiggin' that way, an' yerself as ould as ye are," she observed.

"Sure what can I do?" he returned, sorrowfully. "I haven't a hole nor a corner to lay me head in."

He paused, and then struck the window-sill with his lean fist.

"I'd die sooner than go to the workhouse!" he exclaimed.

"Ah, God help ye!" ejaculated Mary.

There was a pause, during which she surveyed him curiously.

"I believe you're no more mad nor myself," she said after a moment. "What in the name o' goodness do ye carry on wid all that nonsense for?"

Forty-Bags gazed at her sharply, his eyes twinkling more and more, his mouth slowly expanding, his whole face assuming an expression at once elated and incomparably sly. In truth, the man was a little mad, and found it politic to appear more so; but he received this tribute to his sanity as the very highest compliment. Presently, however, his face clouded over.

"A man must live the best way he can," he said, "an' there's not much life good or bad left in me. I'll die wid my head in a ditch."

"For the Lord's sake, don't be talkin' that way!" exclaimed the woman in a shocked voice.

"What way else can I talk? They'll find me dead by the side of the road, an' they'll take what little I've got an' lave me to be buried by the parish."

"Ah, me poor fella!" returned Mary, with a kind of contemptuous sympathy, "sure you wouldn't be worth robbin' wherever ye was found. God help ye!"

Again the sly look overspread Forty-Bags' face; there was no hilarity mingled with the expression this time, however, but rather a kind of pathos.

"An' that's true," he assented after a pause. "Nobody's such a fool as to want to go robbin' me."

He set down the empty bowl and turned towards her.

"But I'll tell ye the truth, Mum—"

"Miss," interrupted Mary, bridling.

"I ax yer pardon, Miss—my eyes is growin' dim, ye see." (Nevertheless they twinkled.) "Well, Miss, as I was sayin', I'm that tired an' w'ary I'd be contint enough to lie down in the gully-hole, if I could but make sure I'd be buried decent. But the thought is ever and always before my mind, even when I'm dancin', an' crackin' jokes wid the boys, 'Maybe I'll drop down dead this minute,' says I to meself, 'an' then they'll just throw me out, an' let the parish get me.' An' other times, when I'm stravaguin' along the road by meself, an' 'ud give the world to lie down an' take a bit of a rest, I thinks again: 'Maybe it's here I'll die, an' some stranger 'll come an' sthrip all I have off of me.' I declare to Heaven I haven't had a wink of sleep these three nights."

At this moment the sound of an approaching footfall caused Mary to step round the angle of the laundry and inspect the yard. The under laundry-woman, Mrs. Curly by name, was making her way through the gate at the further end. Mrs. Curly was no favourite of Mary's, for she had had the audacity to marry a year or so before, and had even been so ill-advised, during the past month, as to leave the laundry in the middle of a busy day's work, and go home and have a baby. It was true she had wasted as little time as possible over this achievement, and had resumed her place at the tubs within a week; nevertheless, Mary was not pleased with her, and had treated her since the event with a cold and distant severity.

"Is there somebody comin'?" exclaimed Forty-Bags, starting up and clutching at his sacks and bundles.

"Only the woman that does be helpin' me," returned Mary, impatiently. "Ye've no call to be afear'd. The poor creature's lost for want of a sleep," she murmured to herself; then addressing the old man again, "Look at here now! Get up out o' that, an' I'll take ye to a place where ye can have your sleep out, and nobody 'll be throubin' ye."

Catching him by the arm and half-pushing, half-dragging him along, she piloted him to the drying-ground, and, unlocking the gate, propelled him and his various paraphernalia up the steps and into a remote corner behind a syringa bush.

"Lie down there," she commanded, "and have your sleep out, an' I'll come an' call ye in the cool of the evenin', when there's nobody about."

He looked at her for a moment suspiciously, and she drew herself up much offended.

"Ye dirty ould fella!" she exclaimed, "I give ye me word I wouldn't touch yerself nor anythin' about ye for the Queen's crown."

He drew a long breath.

"In the name of God I'll trust ye," he said, solemnly, and dropped upon the ground, gathering all his goods close to him and resting his head on the biggest sack.

Mary stood looking down at him with her brows drawn together, and her under lip thrust out; then muttering, "The creature has no sense," she made her way down the steps again, locked the gate, and reached the laundry just as the panting Mrs. Curly turned the corner.

"I wonder ye took the throuble to come back at all," remarked Mary, sarcastically. "It's gettin' on for three o'clock, it is."

"It was the child kept me," faltered the little mother, remorsefully. "Whatever the poor ould Gran' done on him I couldn't tell ye; but when I got back home, he was roarin' an' bawlin', till I thought he'd be convulsed before me eyes. I hadn't the heart to go lave him agin till I had him paycified."

"Why, then, if you're goin' to stop at home every time the child cries, ye'd best stop out o' this altogether," retorted Mary, acidly. "There, get them apens out o' soak, and don't stand starin' at me, as if there was nothin' to be done."

Having by this display of authority reinstated herself in her own opinion—for her conscience had previously pricked her for her culpable weakness with regard to Forty-Bags—Miss Doyle banged down Spot's bowl before him, twitched a few fine things off the line, and proceeded to clear-starch them with her usual deftness, pausing every now and then to ejaculate aloud various comments on Mrs. Curly's folly.

"Mercy on us! The woman thinks the world's comin' to an end because the child let a bit of a yell. . . . Bless us an' save us, it's aisy seen it's the first he is. . . . A body 'ud think the ould Granny 'ud be able to keep the little wan quiet, an' her afther r'arin' a dozen childher of her own."

Poor Mrs. Curly's head stooped lower and lower over her washing trough; but she ventured on no response, though one or two of the younger servants, who came out, according to custom, to assist Mary in the afternoon, nudged each other indignantly, and observed in whispers that the ould one beyant was gettin' more cross-grained every day.

The seven o'clock bell duly proclaimed that the hour for repose had come; a procession of labourers and farm-horses passed through the gate at the far end of the yard. Mrs. Curly caught up her bonnet and flew out of the door, without pausing to hear her superior's sarcastic adjuration not to let the grass grow under her feet, else maybe she'd find the child cryin' agin. The farm-horses were stabled for the night, the men had departed, and Mary, after listening till the last step had died away, drew her key from her pocket and proceeded cautiously towards the drying-ground.

The rays of the evening sun, that left the lower part of the slope in shadow, had crept up to the corner where Forty-Bags lay still sound asleep. His battered old hat had fallen off, and his poor unkempt head was fully exposed to the pitiless glow; every furrow on the brow stood out, every line in the worn face; a wanton little breeze toyed with his ragged white hair and beard. Mary looked at him, with the same expression of perplexity and compassion which had before marked her usually harsh face.

"The poor ould fella!" she said to herself. "He's sleepin' as innocent as a child. I wisht to goodness I could lave him so; but it wouldn't be right."

Nevertheless, she turned away and went very softly down the steps and into the house. There she marched with a step of a dragoon, down the passages and across the servants' hall, to a particular cupboard in the corner, where she kept her private store of tea and sugar. Mary always bought her own tea, which was of better quality than that consumed by her mistress; it was her custom, moreover, to make this refreshing beverage for herself at any moment when she felt inclined, and without regard to the common meal-time of the other servants. Her proceedings on this occasion, therefore, excited no remark. She reached down her small brown teapot, measured out three spoonfuls from her private caddy, possessed herself of her own cup and plate—both being of old-fashioned eggshell china with raised lilac flowers on a white ground—and having further provided herself with a loaf, knife, and butter, and duly "wet the tay" from the kitchen kettle, stalked out of the house into the laundry again.

"Herself has one of her quare fits on her," remarked the kitchenmaid, looking after her, but no further comment was made.

Having poured out the tea in her own precincts, and prepared one or two slices of thick bread-and-butter, Mary returned to Forty-Bags, who remained still in the position in which she had left him.

"Forty-Bags," she called, cautiously.

The sleeping figure did not stir.

"It's time to be gettin' up now, Forty-Bags," she insisted, and stretching out her foot in its flat slipper, she pushed him with it.

Forty-Bags turned over a little, and one hand twitched, but he gave no further sign of life.

"Get up out o' that, ye ould sckamer!" cried Mary; and, setting down the cup at a safe distance, she bent over him, and, in spite of her previous asseverations, shook him vigorously by the shoulder.

"Get up, I tell ye; I can't be wastin' my time here all night."

With a shrill, quavering scream, that nevertheless was strangled midway, Forty-Bags woke, stared at her with starting eyes, and then hurriedly drawing his various bags towards him, sat clutching them to his breast, a heap of quaking terror and misery.

"Ye ould gawn!" exclaimed Mary, with withering contempt. "What in the name o' goodness are ye afeared of? I wouldn't lay a finger on anythin' belongin' to ye for the whole world. Sit up like a Christian and drink the beautiful cup o' tay I'm after bringin' ye, and then ye must be leggin' off out o' this, for I have to lock up and go inside."

Forty-Bags had by this time recovered his wits, and now fell to humble protestations of contrition and gratitude.

"I don't know what in the world come over me, Miss," he added, "I'm afeared o' me life to go asleep, for when I do drop off I'm that dead asleep, I don't know where I am when first I have me eyes open. That's the way it is wid me, ye see, an' that's what makes me terrified o' lyin' down for a minit. Anybody might find me—an' anybody might take the few little things I have from me."

"Now look-at here," said Mary, impressively; "ye'll be losin' your life altogether, me poor man, if ye don't have your proper night's rest. Why don't ye lave whatever it is ye're so afeared o' losin'—your few shillin's, or whatever it is ye do be carryin' about wid ye—why don't ye lave it somewhere safe,

where nobody 'ud be in danger o' findin' it? I'm sure Father Macdonnell down below 'ud be glad to take charge of it for ye, an' ye could be sure it would be safe if the holy man was mindin' it for ye."

Forty-Bags set down his cup and surveyed her with his head on one side, and his mouth screwed up with the cunning, secretive look she had before noticed.

"Maybe his Reverence 'ud want to go puttin' it in the Bank," he said, "an' if I wanted to take it out agin, maybe they wouldn't give it to a poor ould fella like me."

"The Bank, indeed," said Mary, with a crow of laughter. "Set ye up."

"Father Macdonnell's gettin' to be an ould man, too," pursued Forty-Bags, reflectively. "He might be the first to die, an' who 'ud be gettin' my money then?"

"Ah, I haven't patience to be talkin' to ye!" cried Mary. "Why don't ye dig a hole and bury it yerself, then? It 'ud be betther for ye to do that nor go cartin' it about the country, thinkin' every moment someone was comin' to rob ye."

The old man's jaw dropped, and he gazed at her earnestly: the idea was evidently new to him.

"Why don't ye do that, honest man?" pursued Mary, following up her advantage; her impatience to bring the interview to a close was supplemented by a real compassion for the forlorn old fellow's plight.

"If I was to find some rale safe place," he faltered, after a pause.

"I tell ye what," cried she, eagerly. "I'll go fetch a spade, and ye can dig a hole on the very spot where ye've been lyin'. Nobody ever sets foot here except meself, an' I keep the place locked up night an' day. It's as safe as the Bank, an' ye can get at it whenever ye like."

Forty-Bags leaned forward, a hand clutching either knee, his blue eyes scanning Mary's face, with intense, almost fierce, enquiry; but she met his gaze without flinching.

"I've made ye the offer," she said; "ye can please yerself about takin' it or lavin' it. I'll pass ye me word never to lay a finger on whatever ye choose to lave here, an' to keep it safe till ye come for it again."

"Will ye give me yer word never to let on about it to any livin' soul?" he asked, eagerly.

"That will I," she returned. "I'll never open me lips about it to man or mortal, an' I'll never go next or nigh your hidin'-place, or ax to see what's in it, unless ye give me lave. Will that do ye?"

"That'll do me," agreed Forty-Bags, after a minute. "There's one thing, though," after ruminating again, with pursed lips and gathered brow; "if I was to fall sick or die—I'd like ye to go to it, then."

"Well, I could do that," said Mary, with a short laugh. "If I get word that ye're sick I'll dig it up and send it to ye—"

"Bring it to me—bring it to me," interrupted Forty-Bags. "I'd not thrust anyone, only yerself."

"Well, well, I'll bring it to ye then," agreed Mary. "Ye don't thravel so far these times that I couldn't find ye aisy. An' if I get word ye're dead, I'll bury ye."

"That's it," returned Forty-Bags, nodding contentedly; "bury me decent. I'd like to be buried decent. I'd like to have a bit of a wake for all friends."

"I'll bury ye as decent as yer money 'ull afford," conceded Mary. "Harry up with your tay now, an' I'll go for the spade. I can't stop here all night, ye know."

He caught up his cup again, and Mary betook herself to the toolhouse near the cartshed, presently returning with a spade.

"Will I dig," she enquired, "while ye're lookin' out whatever it is you want buried?"

He eyed her slyly. "Turn your back, then," he said.

She obeyed with a short laugh, and fell to work, first cutting out a large square sod, and then digging vigorously beneath it. Her task was no light one, for the ground had been undisturbed for many years, and the roots of the bushes got in the way; nevertheless, she had accomplished the digging of a fairly deep hole before Forty-Bags had collected his treasure.

"Don't turn round!" he cried, almost with a scream, as she rested on her spade.

"Ah, bad scan to the man! What in the world are ye doin'?"

No answer from Forty-Bags, but the sound of easier fumbling, accompanied now and then by faint chinks.

"It's the wealth of the world ye've got there, I believe," she called out jocosely after a moment.

"A few pence—a few pence," he moaned, half to himself.

"A few pence, indeed; that's the most ye'll ever get together, me poor fella!"

Miss Doyle's face softened, as she thought of the long years of hardship, the self-imposed privations, which had enabled the old man to scrape together from the alms of the poor the palty sum needed to save him from a pauper funeral.

"An' he'd be hard-set to get that much," she said to herself. "Are ye ready now?" she asked aloud.

"I'll not keep ye wan minyit more, Mum—Miss, I mane; that's the last. Now I have it tied up an' ready."

Without waiting for further permission, Mary whisked round, and found Forty-Bags sitting in the midst of the *débris* of his property. Open bundles and gaping bags surrounded him on all sides; the ground was strewn with a chaotic assemblage of rags, old bones, potatoes, bits of glass and china, rusty nails, and the like, while he hugged to his breast a small package, carefully tied up in his cherished fragment of red waistcoat.

"Bless me soul!" exclaimed Mary, half-amused and half-indignant. "Ye'll have to clear up all that rubbish, me good man, afore ye go out o' this. I wonder what in the name o' goodness," she added to herself, "that poor daft ould body is goin' to hide, if them's the treasures he carries about wid him."

Crawling on his knees, Forty-Bags approached the hole, and with trembling hands bestowed his treasure therein; between them they replaced the earth, Forty-Bags working with his fingers, and Mary with her spade; the sod was once more set in position, and when well stamped down, rendered the hiding-place almost undiscoverable. With a deep sigh Forty-Bags squatted back on his heels and gazed at it, and then looked up at Mary, his face full of piteous entreaty.

"It'll be as safe wid me," said she, earnestly, "as if that green sod was the altar itself."

The solemnity of her words and manner seemed to convince the other, and hurriedly rising and collecting his heterogeneous property—Mary stalking after him the while and pointing with her spade to any odd fragment he might have been disposed to overlook—he flung himself round at length in his accustomed manner and took his departure, pausing only at the gate to invoke the blessing of Heaven upon her. Mary followed him down the steps in silence, locked the gate, and stood watching the odd-looking, slipshod figure till it disappeared; then shrugging her shoulders, and remarking that it was a quare thing anyway, she betook herself indoors.

During the next few weeks he returned from time to time, being careful always to choose the dinner hour. Mary regaled him on each occasion with a meal, and the permission to indulge in a good sleep in the proximity of his buried treasure. She was beginning to take an odd kind of interest in the forlorn old waif, who had thrown himself upon her mercy, and usually lingered a few minutes in his company, listening to his disjointed talk and encouraging him when he seemed low-spirited, for, as he confided to her, he was "terrible lonesome" without the few little things he had carried about with him for so long. "They was as good as childer to me, Miss," he said, with a queer smile.

When, towards autumn, a month passed without a call from Forty-Bags, Mary began to feel uneasy. She made surreptitious enquiries in the neighbourhood, but, though everyone laughed at the sound of his name, no one appeared to have heard anything of the old fellow. At last, a pedlar brought news which sorely distressed her. He had unpacked his wares while Mary's back was turned, and had placed his tray of brass trinkets on one of the laundry window-sills, and the maids had hurried out to inspect them. Mary, overhearing the chatter and excitement, leaned out from the window above and sternly commanded him to "clear off out o' that." Then, struck by a sudden thought, she withdrew her head and came downstairs.

"You do be thravellin' the country a great deal, don't ye?" she asked. "Did ye ever chance to come across ould Forty-Bags?"

The maids surreptitiously nudged each other, and one remarked in a loud whisper that Mary was getting anxious for news of her beau.

"Forty-Bags, is it?" said the pedlar; "sure the old fellow is dead an' buried this fortnight—"

"Ye don't say so!" cried Mary, turning quite pale and falling back against the door-post.

The girls gazed at her, open-mouthed.

"Dead as a door-nail, ma'am," said the pedlar, cheerfully.

"Sure they found him lyin' by the roadside wid his head hangin' over a ditch, the Lord ha' mercy on him."

"Save us and bless us," ejaculated Mary. "Who—who buried him?"

"Why, who do you think?" retorted the man, facetiously. "Her Majesty the Queen, or maybe the Lord Liftinant? Who'd bury the likes o' him?"

"Don't tell me he was buried by the parish," cried Mary, throwing out her hand.

"Ah! Well, maybe he wasn't," returned the pedlar with an elaborate wink. "Maybe he had a great, gran' funeral wid a hearse from Dublin and feathers to the horses' heads. Sure, wasn't he a lord, an' why wouldn't his lordship be buried elegant?"

"I don't know how ye can have the heart to go makin' fun o' them that's dead an' gone," said Mary, in a shaking voice. Then fixing angry eyes upon him, "I don't believe he's dead at all," she cried.

"Ye may please yourself about believin' it," retorted the other. "I've been readin' all about it in the *Leinster Express*, an'

what's more, I seen his funeral startin' off, an' me leggin' it out from Roscreagh."

Mary stood dumfounded, and the man continued with a laugh: "Wasn't it countin' the carriages I was, an' admirin' the horses."

"Ah! don't be goin' on with your non-ense!" cried Miss Doyle, indignantly. "Pack up all that rubbish now, an' march off out o' this! Get back to your work, girls, or I'll walk yez straight off to the mistress. Mrs. Curly, I suppose it's jew'l'ry you want to be buyin' for that fine young son o' yours."

Nevertheless, Mary remained very anxious and ill at ease, and walked two miles and more to the town that evening, that she might procure some back numbers of the *Express*. After diligent searching, she duly found a paragraph, which set forth the discovery by some children on their way to school of the body of an old man lying by the roadside. "Death had evidently taken place some hours previously," said the paper, "and was probably painless, for the face presented a calm appearance. He proved to be a character well known in the neighbourhood, and popularly called Forty-Bags, from the number of sacks which he was accustomed to carry. These, on being examined, contained nothing of value beyond a few potatoes, being filled with rags and rubbish of all descriptions; two or three pence were secreted about his person, and he was duly buried by the Roscreagh Union."

Mary hastened home, and though it was almost dusk, provided herself with a spade, and at once proceeded to dig up Forty-Bags' treasure. Here was the bundle, just where the poor old fellow had deposited it. It was very heavy, and when Mary opened it, proved to contain coins. Not pennies—even in the fading light she could see that—but silver: shillings, florins, half-crowns. Why! there was actually a gold piece! Another, and another; and here in this pocket-book were notes—pound notes! Sitting back on her heels, Mary counted again and again, for she could not believe the evidence of her senses. Yet her calculations had ever the same result. Forty-Bags' savings amounted in all to nearly fifty pounds.

"And to think that the creature was buried by the Workhouse," groaned she. Her face worked, and she burst into tears.

Great was the excitement and curiosity in the vicinity of "The Coort" when Mary Doyle, having obtained permission from her mistress, announced her intention of giving a party in the laundry. Her fellow-servants were surprised, and at first inclined to be offended, on finding that her invitations were sent, for the most part, to dwellers in cabins and other quite poor folk; but finding that Mary seemed indifferent to their attitude, they changed their minds and decided to make the best of it. They did not subsequently regret this condescension, for Mary's entertainment was carried out on a lavish and extensive scale. The ironing tables had been brought down from an upper room, and groaned under a variety of eatables: solid joints sent in cold from the little "ho-tel" in the neighbouring country town, roast fowls, pies, and cakes galore, not to mention a barrel of porter, flanked by an imposing array of bottles.

Far from seeming elated, however, from the consciousness of her own munificence or the compliments which it had called forth, Mary, who was dressed in black, wore an expression of almost fierce melancholy. When all were seated she rose to her feet and looked solemnly at her assembled guests.

"I haven't axed ye here for the fun o' the thing," she said, severely, "or to see yez make bastes o' yourselves eatin' an' drinkin'. I sent for yez to come together, in memory of an honest man that yez all knowed, an' oftentimes made sport of. The rayson I called ye together to-night is to show respect to the memory o' poor Forty-Bags."

There was a general exclamation.

"He was let die in a ditch an' was buried by the parish—unbeknownst to myself, or I wouldn't have allowed it; but what I can do I will do. Yez had better think of him now—all of yez—kind and respectful, for this is his wake."

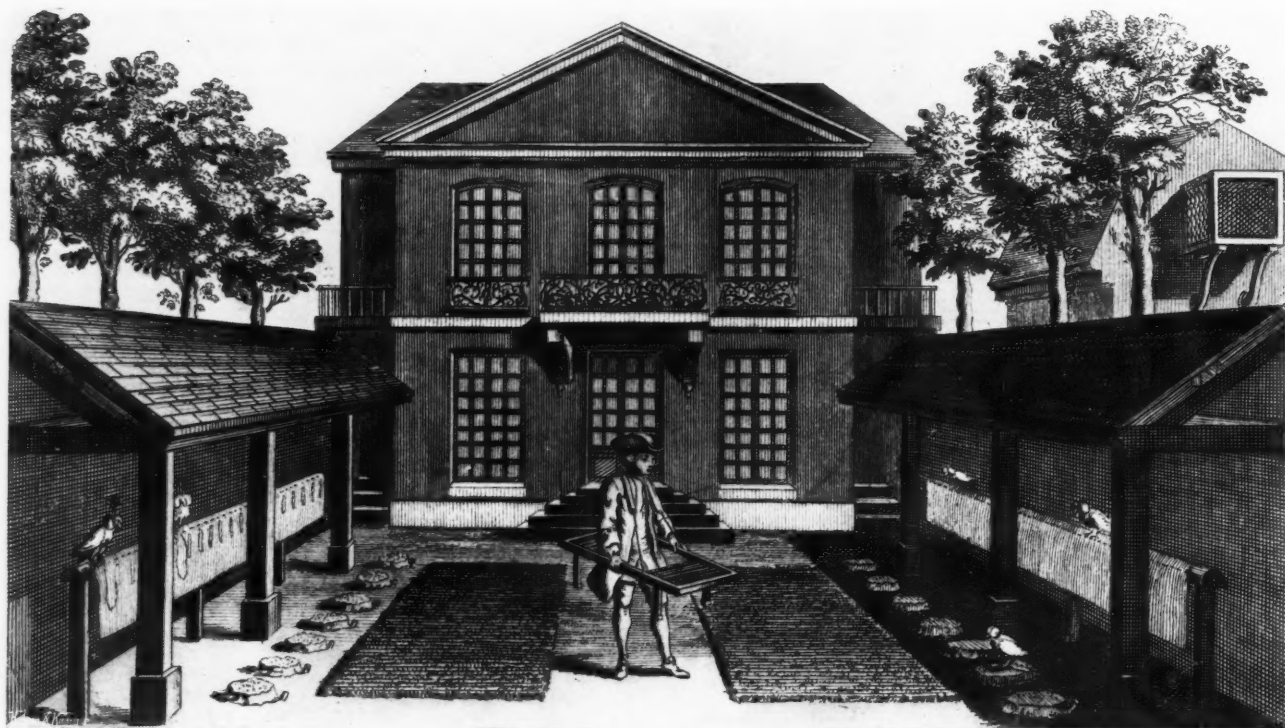
There was a pause, and then a shout of admiring laughter.

"More power to ye, Miss Doyle."—"Did anybody ever hear the like o' that?" . . . "Sure maybe there was more between him an' her nor anybody knew," said somebody, becoming serious all at once.

Folks nudged each other and nodded, and reminded each other in whispers how the old one had often said 'twas by her own choice she didn't get married. On a friend approaching her with a respectful query, Mary relaxed so far as to respond with a sour smile and an emphatic "No matter!" and the gossips, failing to obtain satisfaction on this point, turned their attention to the business in hand, remarking whichever way it was she was doin' well for the poor ould fella.

Forty-Bags' wake was long remembered in the neighbourhood. As one of the guests subsequently remarked: "It was the grandest set-out that ever was known in them parts, and the only thing wantin' was the corpse itself."

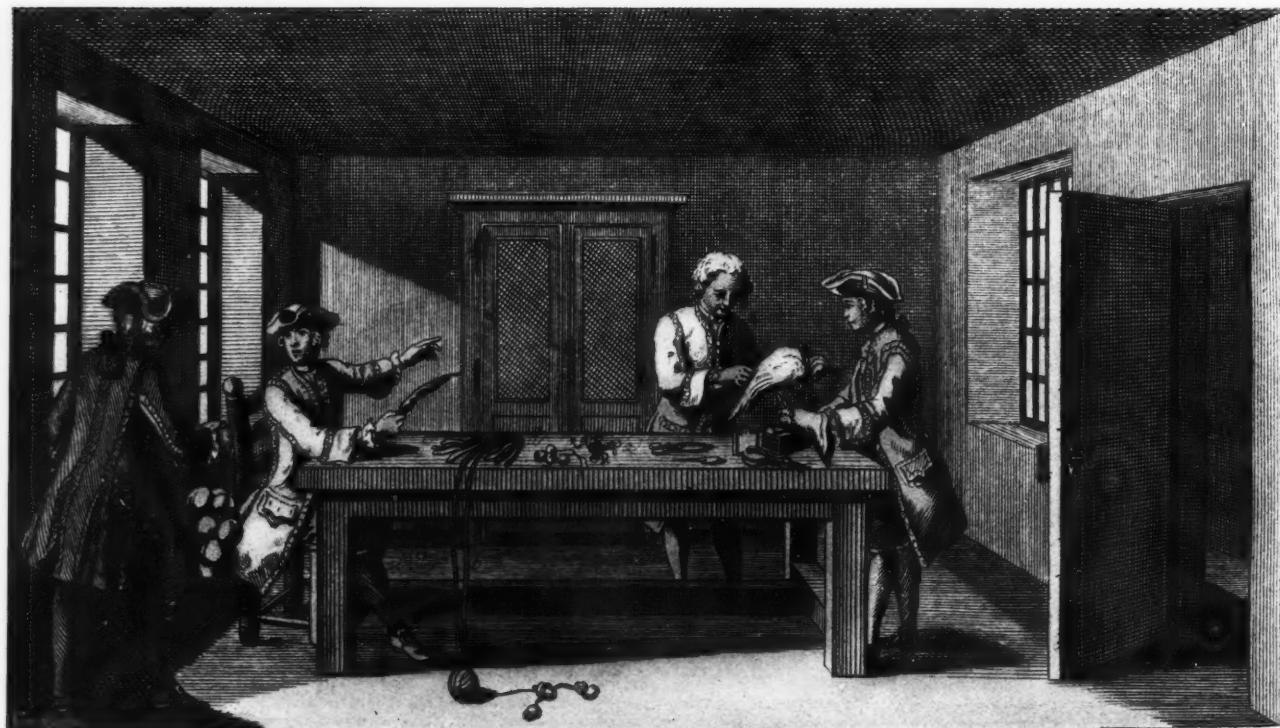
FALCONERS AND THEIR ART.



EXTERIOR OF MEWS.

THE quaint illustrations here reproduced from a folio volume published in Paris in 1763, attest in a striking way the steadfastness with which falconers have for the last century and a-half adhered to the main principles established in their art, though at the same time showing how in some minor particulars they have deviated from them. While the attire of the falconers themselves has been revolutionised, the "furniture," by which is meant the personal adornments and trapping of their hawks, has remained almost identically the same. The buildings in which both men and birds are lodged have undergone considerable change—which has not been altogether in favour of the more modern times. But it will probably be admitted that where alterations have been made in the fashion by which a hawk's dress is governed, they have been in the direction of greater simplicity and convenience. Thus the hoods now used are not disfigured, like most of those worn

by the falcons of the last century, by cheek-pieces of inordinate size, making the wearers look rather like owls. Nor are the plumes which surmount these head-dresses reared aloft on thin and bare stems or stalks, which must have added to the weight of the encumbrance without at all adding to its attractiveness from an artistic point of view. The "cadge" on which trained hawks are still carried on a journey is, in the main, exactly the same as those which were in vogue when Shakespeare wrote, and which are sometimes presented on the stage when "As You Like It" is played in a modern theatre. But the legs and feet by which it is now supported are less cumbrous and heavy than those shown in the illustrations. And if the artist has correctly drawn the cadge in the first illustration, as an unpadded frame of rather sharp-edged wood, we have now improved upon the model by insisting that it should always be covered with a softer layer of some stuff which the hawks' feet can grip easily without any risk



THE FALCONERS' WORK-ROOM.



VARVELS.

appears to have been the mound, or hillock of turf, which to the number of no less than fourteen may be seen ranged on the outside of the mews within which the screen-perch is rigged up. By the side of each mound is seen a peg with a small hole in it, to which the end of the leash was attached. In these days such structures are only used, if at all, for the accommodation of a newly-caught hawk, which has only recently been taken out of the bow-net. Other trained hawks are attached either to wooden "blocks" with padded tops, if they are of the long-winged kinds, or to arched bow-perches if they are short-winged. And this innovation must, one would think, certainly be for the advantage both of hawk and man. For the hawks' feet would be liable, except in very dry weather, to get both damp and dirty on the turf. And the man's labours would be much increased by the necessity of frequently substituting new for old turf, whereas a wooden block will last for years without the need of any attention. Possibly the scarcity of iron for making spikes and staples for the blocks would, in very early times, induce the falconers to use turf and pegs instead.

Perhaps the most notable departure from ancient precedent has been the complete disuse of the "varvel" (a flattened ring of metal about the size of a sixpenny-piece), which was habitually attached to the old-fashioned jess. These



BACK OF HOOD.

gained to the falconer by the addition were small and often questionable. It will be seen that they had engraved on them sometimes the name of the owner; and in a time when the killing or stealing of a lost hawk was a highly penal offence, this indication would have been of much greater use than it could be now. The bell of French make in the last century seems to have been not spherical, but of a flattened shape; and its shank is much less prominent than that of the bells now used, whether made in Holland or in India. As for the jesses, if the writer of the notes to these plates is right, their length was absurdly excessive—10in. instead of 7in., which is quite enough. And it is difficult to see how a bewit made in

of slipping. Another and more important change has been made in the form and substance of the apparatus upon which the trained hawk spends his time when "weathering" out of doors. According to the old plate the normal resting-place of hawks of all kinds

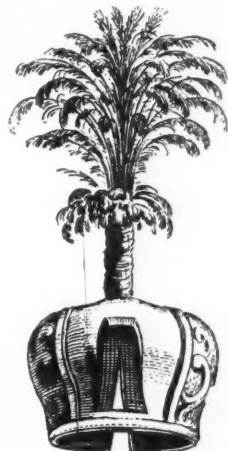
the way suggested could ever have served its purpose. The shape of the umbrella figured seems to show that the old French falconers reckoned habitually on much calmer weather than we in these degenerate days dare to expect. Five out of ten days that a latter-day falconer went out



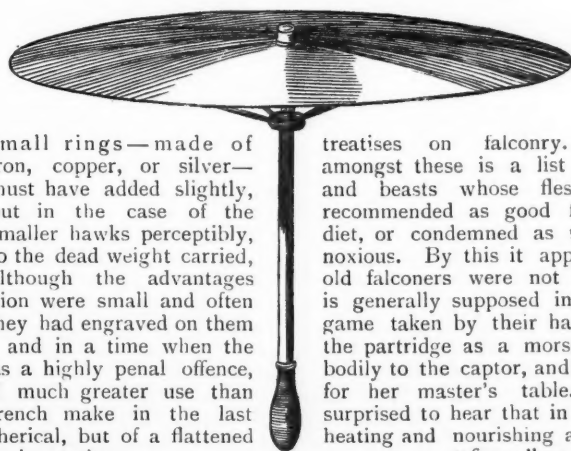
TURF BLOCKS.

on a Wiltshire down with a Chinese-shaped umbrella, it would be blown inside out before he had walked very far. The large second illustration (which represents a work-table spread with the implements of the falconer's craft) is interesting as showing that in the case of some hawks—obviously the best-tempered—the delicate operation of imping a broken feather in the wing could be performed while the hawk operated upon was standing up hooded on the fist. In these days it is the common, or more probably the universal, practice for an attendant to "cast" the hawk and hold her down firmly on a cushion, while the operating falconer goes through the rather elaborate manoeuvres necessary for grafting a new feather artificially on to the stump of the old one.

The notes which are annexed to the plates are short, but replete with various items of information not to be found in any of the more pretentious



FRONT OF HOOD.



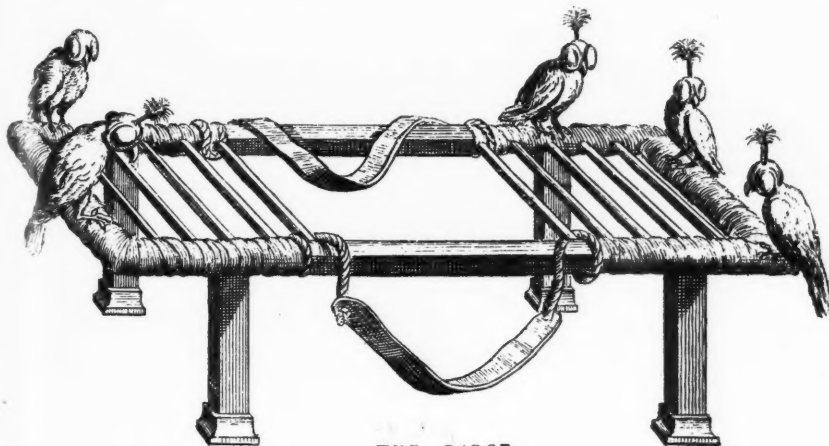
FALCONER'S UMBRELLA.

small rings—made of iron, copper, or silver—must have added slightly, but in the case of the smaller hawks perceptibly, to the dead weight carried, although the advantages

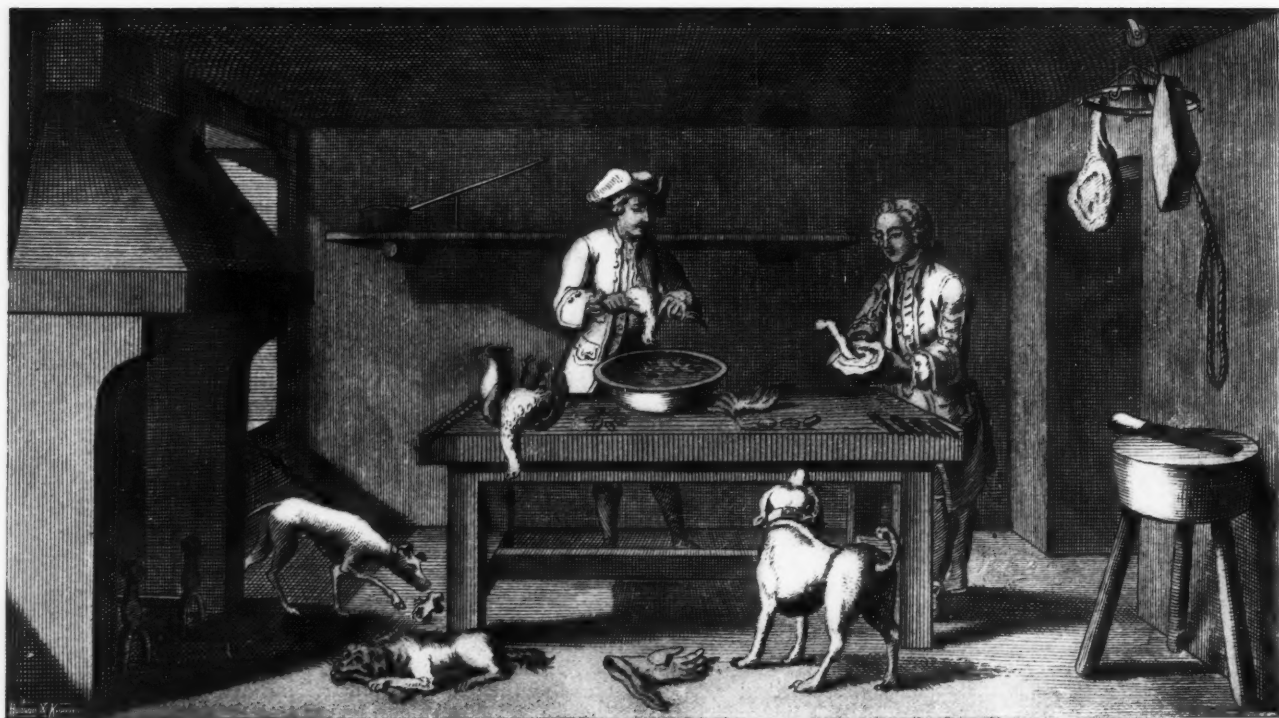
treatises on falconry. Prominent amongst these is a list of the birds and beasts whose flesh is either recommended as good for a hawk's diet, or condemned as unsuitable or noxious. By this it appears that the old falconers were not so greedy as is generally supposed in appropriating to themselves all the game taken by their hawks. It is clear that they regarded the partridge as a morsel which ought often to be allowed bodily to the captor, and not requisitioned (all except the head) for her master's table. Many modern falconers will be surprised to hear that in France the pigeon was considered too

nourishing a food, calculated to make the hawk "fierce" and disobedient. The same fault is found with swallows, merlins, and sparrows. Contrary to the common opinion, it would appear that the old falconers gave their hawks very little butcher's meat. Both mutton and beef are denounced in the notes as likely to cause dullness, and often maladies of an aggravated kind. And the heads both of sheep and bullocks, which in England are in rather special favour, are condemned as a species of food wanting in nutritious qualities, and "bad."

The practice of imping above referred to is one that always interests the person unacquainted with the mysteries of the art. If, indeed, he is shown a feather in a live hawk which has been actually impinged, and impinged so well that the joint between the old and new feathers is almost or quite undiscernible, he is even inclined to think that the operation has been performed by magic. The explanation is that the shaft of the old feather is so cut across with a very sharp edge as to exactly fit the shape of the sliced end of the new feather which is to be grafted on it. As this new feather has been taken from a hawk of the same species and sex and age as the one to be operated upon, it, of course, matches it very exactly; and the only question that then



THE CADGE.



A FALCONER'S LARDER.

remains is how to join the two ends together. For this purpose an imping needle, which is a short length of iron wire filed into a triangular shape, so that it has three flat sides, has already been prepared. It is dipped in brine or vinegar, and then one end is inserted into the thick end of the new leather, leaving the other end to be forced down into the pith of the stump of the other feather. Then the hawk is kept hooded and quiet for a few hours, while the brine or vinegar on the imping needle causes it to rust, and to attach itself so tightly to the pith in which it is embedded that no force will ever avail to tear the two ends of the feather apart.

In the last illustration, two falconers' assistants are shown preparing the food for their charges in the larder, which contains a wooden table, a chopping-block, a fireplace, and kitchen utensils. Although cooked meat is never given to hawks, hot water is often needed, and several of the medicaments prescribed for invalid birds have to be compounded or melted on the fire. Moreover, the grate would doubtless often be useful for cooking a meal for the falconers. Some of the bones, from which the hawks had taken as much as could be scraped or picked off, would make a welcome present for the spaniels or other dogs which prowled about the room, on the watch for such scraps.

There are many other curious pieces of advice given in the notes, including, as was to be expected, some very elaborate and fanciful cures for the maladies to which hawks' flesh is heir.

A DAY AT THE ALLIGATORS.

THE interesting account of "Florida Crocodiles" which appeared in this paper on January 13th has reminded me of a pleasant day's shooting I had in Trinidad, when on a short visit there early in 1904, under the wing of two brother officers who were quartered in Port of Spain at the time. Trinidad had long ceased to be a military station, but, owing to the riots that took place there in 1903, a detachment of infantry was sent from Barbados to maintain order. It is, perhaps, one of the most beautiful, and certainly the most up-to-date, of the West Indian Islands, though the climate is somewhat enervating. It is one of those spots, also, where, coolie labour being in operation, the imported East Indian and West African are both to be seen following their respective occupations; and one cannot fail to be struck by the dignified, respectful, and loyal bearing of the former, as compared with the boisterous, opinionative, and unreliable demeanour of the latter.

The Caroni River, which flows into the sea at about three miles from Port of Spain, boasts of plenty of alligators; so, armed with service carbines, we set forth to try our luck there. We drove to a point some four miles up the river, where we found our boat in waiting—an ordinary four-oared gig, manned by two negro oarsmen—and started up stream. The Caroni is a sluggish, muddy river, running about one to one and a-half miles an hour, varying from some thirty-five to sixty yards in width, with low, slimy banks, and plenty of vegetation on each one. It struck

us as an ideal spot for our quest, but by no means an inviting one for a dip, however sultry should be the weather! It was a warm, still day, as we three sat silently in the stern of the boat, being rowed slowly, and as noiselessly as possible, up the centre of the stream, each keenly on the alert for a stray alligator basking on the bank, or for the sight of one in the water, when it requires very sharp eyes to discern the reptile, only the tip of the nose and protruding pair of eyes being then visible, especially when, as is the creature's wont, he elects a spot among floating brushwood, weeds, or fallen leaves in dead water. We had gone about three-quarters of a mile, the silence broken from time to time by the dull, almost inaudible splash of an alligator taking to the water on our approach, when we suddenly discovered we had just rowed past a fine leaden-coloured-looking fellow lying "broadside on" to us among the grass on the bank. He may have been asleep, or in lurking for some unwary wandering fowl from the neighbouring coolie habitations, or he may have been stolidly watching us; anyhow, he never moved while the boat was being quietly backed to admit of a clearer view. A clean shot through the brain left him apparently lifeless. Keen as we were upon retrieving our "first blood," the boatmen stoutly refused to approach the bank, even, until four more shots had been put through the creature's head. Unfortunately, the cranium was thus much shattered, as may be imagined. I am of opinion that the first shot would have been sufficient, but we had to humour our coloured henchmen, who expressed much apprehension—genuine or simulated, I know not—in regard to apparently-dead alligators, whom, they averred, when least expected, had an unpleasant trick of assuming life again, and with a blow from their powerful tails might break a thwart, a man's leg, or knock a hole in the boat. So, to make quite sure, the animal was towed for fully half-an-hour before being accorded a place in the gig. It was a good specimen, measuring just 8ft., and was presumably some fifty or sixty years old. We then pursued our way up stream, and had several shots at alligators in the water, at from thirty to fifty yards range. There must have been plenty of them about, but the difficulty was to distinguish the protruding nose or eyes of the reptile, which so much resembled a piece of tree-bark or leaf on the surface. The shooting was exciting, too, for in several instances, though the shots went all round the creature's head, it seldom moved until hit, and then, unless in the head, was off, not to be seen by us again. When shot through the head, the alligator floats on top of the water, and is easily secured.

On finding our progress stopped by a large tree that had fallen across the river we retraced our steps down-stream, and had just chosen a cool, shady spot for lunch, with inviting mandarin oranges growing overhead, when we met two naval officers, belonging to the Atlantic and Cruiser Squadrons then in Port of Spain, out for a picnic *à deux* in a ship's dinghy, who told us that they had seen a large alligator about a mile further down, basking on the bank, which had ignored their shouts and attempts to move him. Lunch was immediately put aside, and

we hurried off. We had gone a very long mile, nearer two I should say, and were beginning to fear our quarry had eluded us, when we suddenly came upon him, slowly moving as if stretching himself, and no doubt eyeing us all the time. A well-aimed shot, however, at about 60yds. gave him his quietus. He was a fine fellow, too, about 7ft. 6in. in length. We had now secured five in all, one about 4ft. and two about 5ft., besides the two larger ones. Time was getting on, so after some lunch we made for the estuary and thence in our boat to Port of Spain. We saw no more alligators—they keep to the fresh water and away from the estuary. Had we got further up the river we might have made a larger bag. Near the mouth of the river we descried a flock of twelve pelicans, far too wary to let us get within 500yds. of them, though; we tried a few shots, but without success. They despatched one of their number to scout and reconnoitre us from far above our heads. His report remains a mystery—it could hardly have been a favourable one, for upon his return the flock took wing straight away! We saw a number of beautiful, brightly-plumaged tropical birds, which made me regret not having another spare day in Trinidad to try to secure a few specimens.

There is a small trade done in Trinidad in selling stuffed alligators and their skins, but no artificial means of propagation are pursued there, as in Florida. Considering that the alligator lays from fifty to a hundred eggs, and it is most exceptional, I understand, for any to fail in hatching, there ought to be little fear of the tribe diminishing. Visitors to Trinidad should find no difficulty in getting some alligator-shooting, should this kind of sport appeal to them. We had our alligators stuffed by a local artist, and I think well done, too. The flesh, though not much prized, is sometimes eaten by the negroes.

IN THE GARDEN.

PRUNING OUTDOOR CLIMBING PLANTS.

ALTHOUGH we have had an exceptionally mild winter, and therefore favourable for such outdoor operations as pruning and nailing creepers on walls, it is surprising how large a number of unpruned plants one may see in the course of a short ramble. As many of these will be soon putting on new foliage, it is obvious that pruning cannot be delayed much longer, except at the expense of the plants' future welfare. There are many people who never think of pruning a creeper, and they have their reward in sparrows' nests, blocked gutters, and a constant succession of falling leaves through the summer; and apart from these discomforts, a climbing plant never reveals its true beauty unless it is pruned annually. The Jackmani forms of the Clematis may well be mentioned as cases in point. When the plants are cut to the ground annually, they flower remarkably well; but neglect means a tangled mass of comparatively flowerless shoots. It is too late to prune these now, as they

and the beautiful viticella types should have been cut down in November, or January at the latest. The patens type of Clematis, which includes the beautiful white variety Miss Bateman and the fine blush Fair Rosamund, may still be pruned, merely cutting away weakly and untidy growths or such as interfere with better shoots. The Florida forms are pruned at the same time and in the same way as the above. Duchess of Edinburgh, double white, and Barrillet Deschamps, double mauve, are well-known varieties in this group. Enchantress, double white, and Louis Van Houtte, purple, represent another type, lanuginosa requiring similar treatment to the above. Wistarias are often neglected in the matter of pruning, but if all new growths are cut back to within 3in. or 4in. of the point they started from, a plant will become crowded with spurs and carry a profusion of flowers. If any wall space remains to be filled, or a dead branch has to be removed, young wood must be retained in sufficient quantity to meet requirements. Virginian Creepers and Pyruses are best cut back in the same way, when they have filled their allotted space, as are the Fire Thorn (*Crataegus Pyracantha*) and Ceanothuses. Roses should have been pruned before this, but any shoots left unpruned may be shortened a little, nailing in as much of last year's wood as possible. Where there is no room to train in a young shoot springing from the base of the plant, it is often a good plan to cut it half back, in order to promote fresh shoots to cover bare spaces at the bottom of the wall. Even when such bare places do not exist, an old worn-out branch often does, and this may be cut out when strong young shoots are ready to take its place. Jasmines and Honeysuckles should be pruned on the same lines as Roses, and never hesitate to replace old wood with new when opportunity offers.

FOUR ANNUAL CLIMBING PLANTS.

We are frequently asked to name the annual climbing plants which are of the greatest value when the more permanent kinds are not established. Suppose one has entered into possession of a new garden which it is desired to make beautiful even the first year, the sheet anchor will be the annual flower, so called because it blooms the same year as the seed is sown. The quickest in growth of the annual climbers is the

Japanese Hop (*Humulus japonicus*), which makes terrific growth, so much so that in a few weeks it will ramble over arbour, arch, and anything against which it is placed. The leaves are much like those of the common Hop, except in the case of the variegated variety, which have more colour. We prefer the ordinary kind to the variegated.

Canary Creeper (*Tropaeolum canariense*).—This is a well-known annual climbing plant, graceful, free, and in every way welcome. The pretty light green leaves are almost hidden in summer with the festoons of bright yellow flowers, which hang in profusion from its graceful twining stems. It is a mistake not to examine this climber at frequent intervals to detect the presence of the well-known spittle fly, which has a peculiar fondness for the juices of the *Tropaeolum*. This pest may be easily detected by the frothy substance surrounding it.

The Convolvulus is almost too well known to describe. The flowers are varied in colour, but all the shades are beautiful, and a plant in full bloom is a delightful picture. It is important not to sow the seeds against a high building, but a trellis, low arch, and similar erection, as the growth is not very tall.

Mina lobata.—Seeds of this should be sown in gentle warmth in spring, and the plants put out in a sunny place, where the growth will be more robust than if a shady position is chosen. The flowers are very bright in colour.



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IRISES AND ROSES.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



As we first see the old house of Rothamsted from between the trees, it shows itself for a Jacobean house with later additions in the same manner. But when we come to nearer acquaintance, we see that the house yields a more ancient story. It is at least possible that behind these trim gables and oak-mullioned windows we have the manor house which Henry Gubiun leased to Richard of Merston in 1221. By the front door we enter the old hall, once a great room with an open roof. Its framing of hewn oak, roughly trimmed with axe or adze, can be seen above and below in spite of the later divisions into floors and chambers. Over that end of the hall which may have been divided by a timber screen, and which served for pantry and cellar, we find the solar chamber, the retiring-room of the old lords of Rothamsted. No trace of its staircase remains, and it was probably gained by a ladder stairway. Here in all its simplicity we have the manor house of our forefathers, a great hall having a few outbuildings against it. The timber frame is filled with wattle and daub, plastered on the inner side. When we remember that the life of this house has been continuous through all changes, we seem to see the ghosts of Gubiuns and Nowells wandering in bewilderment through the additions of an age whose comfort demands such mysterious chambers as dressing-rooms and bath-

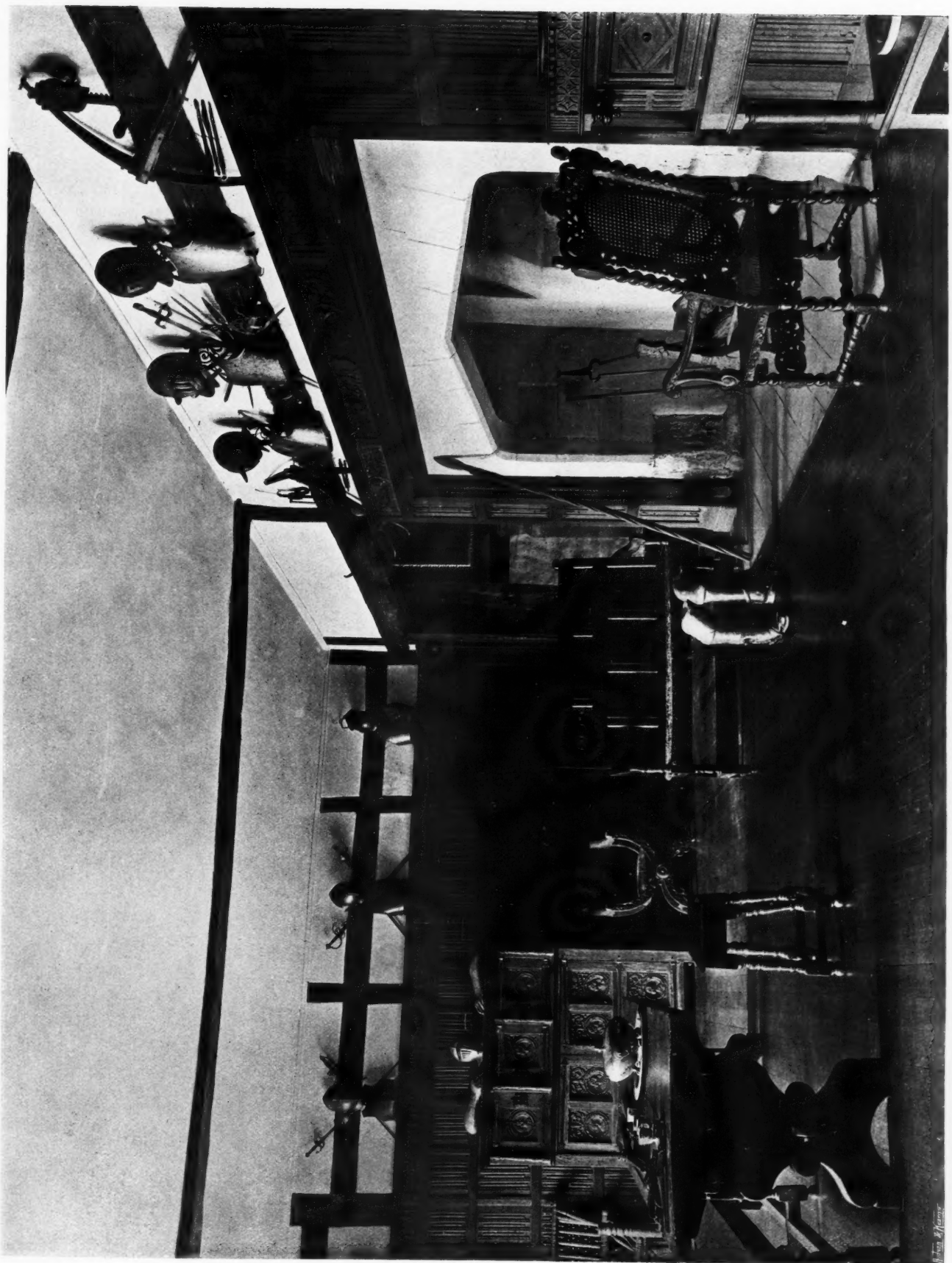
rooms. The next stage in the history of Rothamsted is reached in the days when the English, who had long lost the Roman art of brickmaking, began to clothe their old houses in warm red brick. It is probable that, after the marriage of Edmund Bardolf with the heir of the Cressys in the sixteenth century, Rothamsted became, for its outward side at least, a Tudor manor house faced with brick, with brick chimney-stacks. In the days of the spendthrift Bardolf the house seems to have grown forlorn and neglected, but in 1623 the Wittewronge wealth came to its aid. The widowed Mistress Wittewronge who bought the Bardolf house and lands was eager to provide a fair country seat for her young son John, afterwards the first baronet of his name; and although soon remarried to her second husband, the old Lord Mayor Myddelton, she carried on the work of Rothamsted during her son's minority. Under her hands the house grew at either end, and the foundation work was improved. She gave the main front its domed bellcote with the clock, a picturesque turret so ill-planned that in later years a framing of iron girders had been needed to keep the clock-tower from toppling into the roof. At the same time she changed the peaked gables which had served the Bardolfs to their present form, a reminiscence of those low-country towns which the Wittewronges and Van Ackers had left behind them for liberty of conscience. Within the new gables the lines of the



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THE MORNING-ROOM.

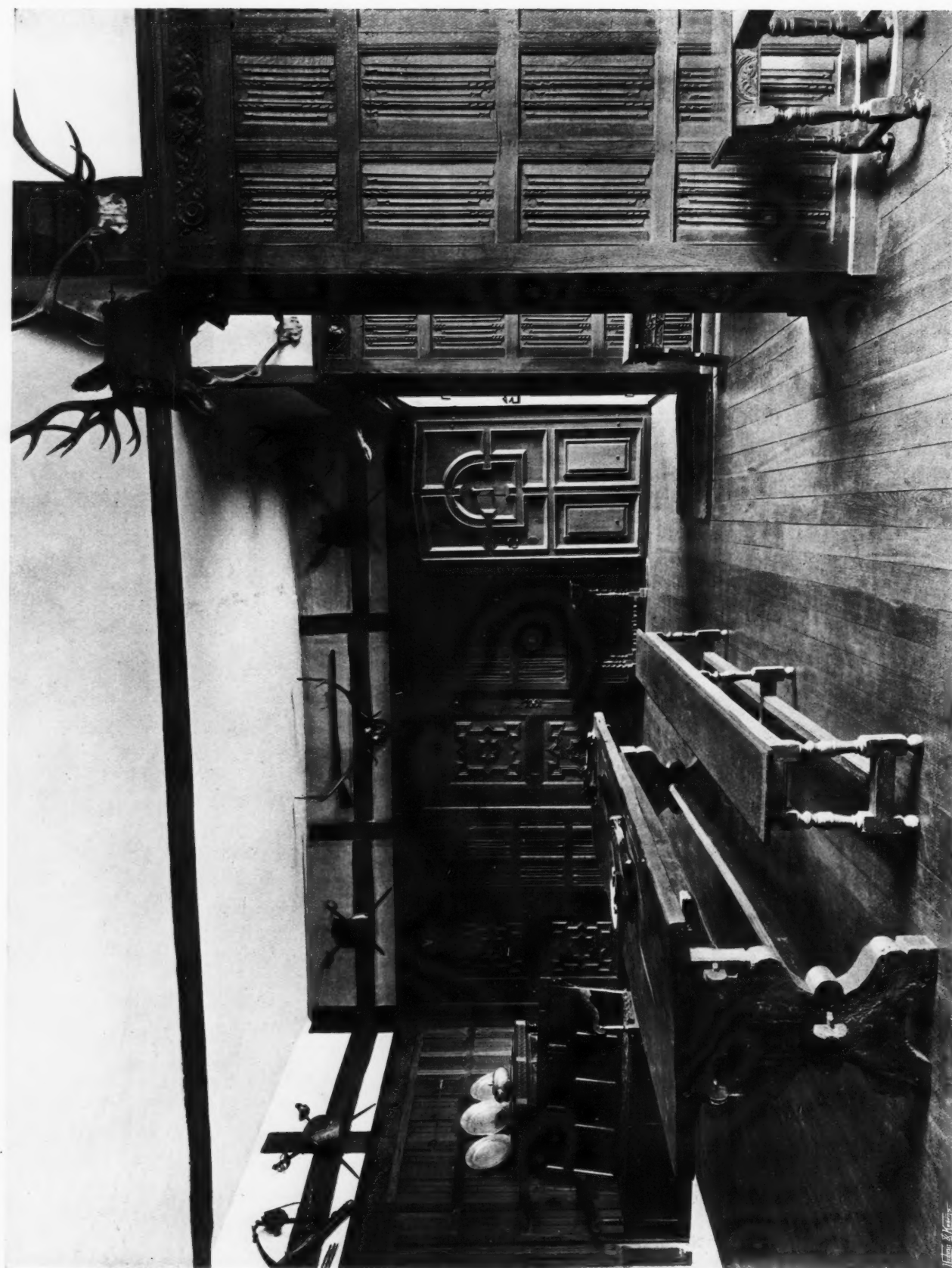
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"COUNTRY LIFE."

THE OLD HALL.

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"COUNTRY LIFE."

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RECESSES IN THE OLD HALL.

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older ones may be clearly traced. Indoors she made greater changes, and in a number of rooms Dame Myddelton could call up the grave household comfort of Dutchmen and Flemings. Panelling covered plaster walls, and pictures hung on the panelling. Tapestry and stamped leather came in, the beautiful verdure hanging of an upper room being still bright and fresh in colour as when the mother left it for her only son. She built the staircase, too, with its flat rails and boldly-moulded newel-posts; but the chief monument of her work is in the many fireplaces and chimney-pieces, rich with carved and painted pilasters and cornices. Dame Myddelton's work remained with little change until the nineteenth century, John Bennet Lawes, afterwards a baronet, beginning about 1863 to add rooms to the house, additions which have been continued by his son, Sir Charles

Lawes-Wittewronge, who has brought the work to an excellent end.

The great hall of Rothamsted has now been lined with old panelling of the linen pattern, with a carved frieze above it. Above the frieze our picture will show how the timber framing of the old house goes up through the ceiling to the roof. The stone fireplace shows other landmarks of change, for the rough foot of the stone jamb must be at least of the fifteenth century, the stump of a jamb against which the Cressys kicked their boot-toes when they came in from the greenwood. The date of 1635 is scratched upon the smoother stone above it, part of the repairs made by Dame Myddelton. Our view of the room from another point shows the front door, with deep moulding of the seventeenth century, and the panelling carried round the bays of



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AT THE FOOT OF THE STAIRWAY.

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THE STAIRWAY.

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the window. In this hall stands the first newel-post of Dame Myddelton's stairway, stout oak for the outer side, and painted rail and balusters on the side next the staircase wall. The old plaster walls, now hidden, for the most part, under tapestry or panels, had many traces of rude painting, the most curious of all being preserved behind the panelling of the dining-room, where a swinging hinge allows it to be uncovered. This wall-painting, which must be of the age of the Bardolf occupation in the sixteenth century, is upon a smooth face of plaster laid over the mortar, and is not broken by the oaken upright of the old house framing which runs through the midst. Below in divisions, Corinthian pillars separating arches with shell-patterned heads, are figured in shades of brown and grey a

plump cat, a talbot hound, a bear, and part of another wild beast. Above a painted cornice is a scene of warfare, a hillside, with a great hill at either end, and hedgerows and the walls of a town. On the hillside five cannon are in action, smoke rolling from their muzzles, and behind the guns ride forward a dozen horsemen in half armour, with long lances, led by a leader with a halbert, another cavalier galloping to join their rear. We have here, no doubt, some action against Scots or Frenchmen thus rudely commemorated on the house-wall of a Bardolf who was with the host on that day. The morning-room, on the right of the great hall, was probably made by Dame Myddelton out of the kitchen which we should look for at this end of the hall, a guess borne out by the fact that we have no trace of a kitchen

older than that of the Wittewronges' age. It is a well-lit and pleasant room, panelled in plain oak. On the wall will be seen the painting of Mistress Wittewronge in lawn cap and ruff. The mantel-piece in the pink room is remarkable for its stone panel, along which, in high relief, move a medley of beasts, the charging boar and the elephant, the camel

here, the chaplain enjoying by tradition the privacy of a little garret.

On this floor is found an iron-bound chest which is perhaps all that remains of the household furniture of the Bardolfs, a chest which was probably used for the charters and muniments of their Rothamsted lands. Near it are certain of those stee-



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PART OF THE DINING-ROOM.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

and the unicorn, the lion and the ibex. The drawing-room, with rich painted and gilded door-heads, shows modern work in good keeping with the old, the fireplace having the painted shield of Lawes quartering Wittewronge. The second or garret floor has still the long gallery-room in which the household servants lay when the first Wittewronges were

traps which, in days not long gone by, were set in the Rothamsted coverts. Their cruel teeth and powerful springs remind us how magnificently above the law Squire Western and his brother squires were seated by custom when they might with impunity hide these terrible engines in the underwood to hold by a mangled leg the unhappy poacher or trespasser. On this floor



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"COUNTRY LIFE."

we approach the wooden bellcote where hangs a bell which has never yet rung to an alarm of fire, that great enemy of old English houses framed with beams and panelled with timber. The chapels of such houses should remember in their litanies the peril of the smouldering chimney beam and the peril of the hot hearth-stone.

The interest of a house in whose walls lie the histories of the home life of twenty generations of Hertfordshire squires would be great indeed were the house swept and bare. Much more, then, may the antiquary and topographer have pleasure where hall and chambers are filled with a plenishing of rare household goods, the like of which few English homes can show.

ENGLISH GOTHIC BUILDINGS.

MR. BOND has rendered yeoman service in his book, "Gothic Architecture in England." So much has been written on the subject, and such wild and remarkable ideas put forward, that the temptation is to turn away from



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ON THE STAIRCASE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

any new book on the subject and to say that there is no room for any other treatise. Mr. Bond, if he does nothing else, proves this view to be wrong. He has, instead of going over the well-worn ground, tried to supply some defects and omissions in other books. He has given a dated alphabetical list of English churches, a want which both architect and archæologist have long felt. The list is by no means complete, and in some cases gives only one of the features of the church, leaving out all mention of the rest. We are

not quite sure that the authorities quoted are always reliable—such, for instance, as the reports of the archæological societies; but still, it is the best list we have up to the present time, and we trust that a revised list will appear containing fuller reference to our smaller churches, where much good work is often destroyed purely from ignorance. If the "Victoria History of the English Counties" is ever finished, it will, in its topography of the counties, contain much matter which will enable Mr. Bond to largely extend his index. A point to be also considered is whether it would not be better to index the churches under counties rather than in one general alphabetical list. Rickman, who has followed



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THE OAK ROOM.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

this plan, enables anyone to see at once what each county has to contribute to the general stock of the country's architecture.

Mr. Bond deprecates the lack of interest among us in architecture; he says that formerly "a knowledge of architecture was a necessary equipment of the gentleman." "Nowadays architecture is outside the precincts of culture," "the students of our national architecture are few." We do not altogether agree with him. Admitting that knowledge of architecture is confined to few, we think there never was a time when architecture appealed so strongly and to so many. It is true that persons admire buildings which are architecturally wrong, but yet they do admire and are proud of our buildings. The number of excursionists who every year visit our cathedrals and churches show what a very great interest is still felt in them, possibly a greater than at any previous time. The interest is doubtless an ignorant interest, and of the hundreds who admire some feature in a church and say "How lovely!" not three per cent. could give any reason for their admiration, but the interest is there—it only wants training and developing. To a great extent this is due to the architects themselves. They are accustomed to say that architecture is a science which can only be appreciated and understood by architects, that the layman knows nothing, and should offer no opinion. Acting on this exclusive spirit, architects have made books on architecture the dulllest of all dull books, and have so disgusted ordinary Englishmen that they never think of looking at one.

If ever architecture is to become a popular study, the first thing to do is to place it in reach of the people; this Mr. Bond has to some extent done. He has taken the chief features of the ordinary mediæval church and tried to explain their object and the reason for their construction, he has traced them down during mediæval times by consecutive treatment—the plan of the church and its modifications to meet local circumstances, why they were made, and with what object; the vaulting and its modifications, which involve the question of buttresses and supports to keep it in its place; the local changes that local circumstances brought about, all these are written in our churches as plainly as possible. The effect of climate, as to whether a church is placed in a district of high or low rainfall, and, if of high, the arrangement how to get away the water; the lighting of the church, and as the windows developed, the necessity for stained glass to take off some of the blaze of light—all these points, as Mr. Bond says, demand a separate treatise, consecutive and complete. This Mr. Bond has tried to give us in this book. On the whole he has been fairly successful, and although there are points on which we differ considerably from him, yet we feel that all who desire to know what our churches are, and why they are built in their particular form will learn much from Mr. Bond's book. To write a parish history—and the task is now a popular one—a knowledge of the history of the church is essential to a knowledge of the history of the parish. The church is the only record that has survived which tells us that the parish was rich or poor in the fourteenth century, shows by the departure from the usual plan, how money ran short; how in the fifteenth century some rich person connected with the parish wanted to make himself remarkable, and deviated from the plan by creating

some abomination that perpetuates the fact of his existence. Another method which we hope to see carried out some day, and for which, although not followed by Mr. Bond, his book to some extent prepares the way, is to treat of the various architectural movements that passed over the country and try to see how far they affected particular districts. Take, for instance, the spire, a member which Mr. Bond says is the "most original, the most religious, and the least essential," and which did not appear in England till the end of the twelfth or the beginning of the thirteenth century. Why are spires so common in some districts and unknown in others? Mr. Bond says it is due to the presence or absence of abundant freestone or cheap transport in the district; that is, whether the district could afford



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ROTHAMSTED: IN THE PINK ROOM.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

Possibly there was also the point, would the tower carry it? for if it would not, and the parish were determined to have a spire, it became detached from the church. The spire may be taken as a fairly correct index of the wealth or poverty of a parish at the date of its building.

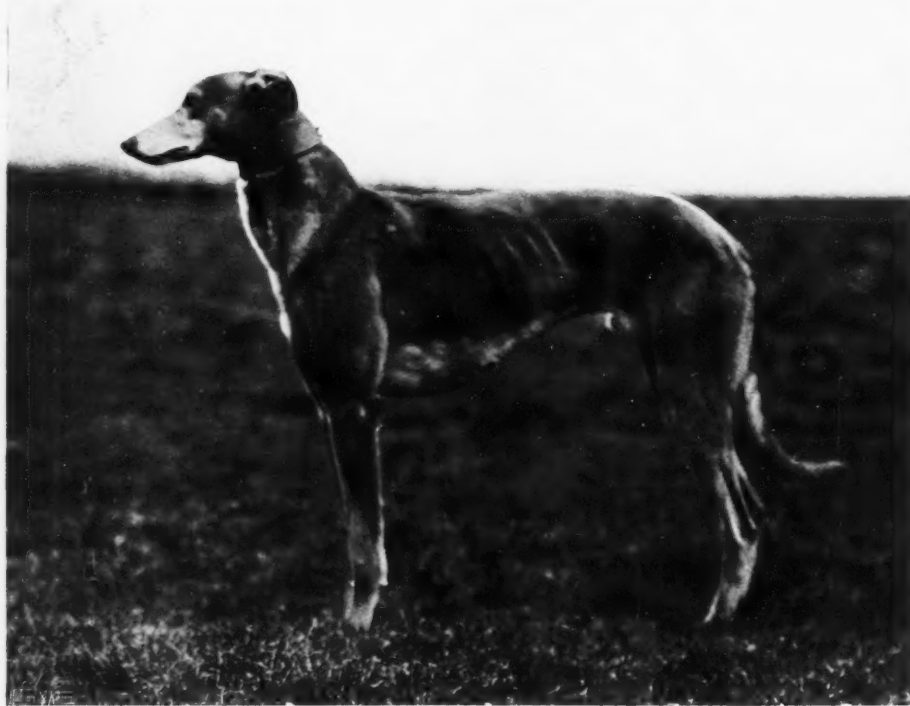
Doorways and porches are again most interesting features. A sculptured doorway must always have been a somewhat expensive luxury; as Mr. Bond points out, for some reason the French form of doorway, with the tympanum peopled with statuary, never took root in England. Mere cost would not account for this; there must be some as yet unexplained reason why the English did not adopt one of the most characteristic features of the French mediævalism. Doorways and porches bring us to

another feature in the English churches wherein they differ from the French: the importance of the south side of the church. The best doorway is usually on the south side. If there is a porch it is usually on the south side. The south aisle is usually more important than the north, broader, with a span roof. The church well, the lych gate, and the yew tree, as Mr. Bond says, are more often on the south than the north. Even to the present day in some places there is an objection to being buried on the north side of the churchyard. A study of country churches and of the north doors and porches would tend to show in which districts the idea of the sanctity of the south side prevailed and in which it did not, and such knowledge of the localities might lead to the discovery of the origin of the idea.

We have not space to follow Mr. Bond into what is, perhaps, the most important part of his book—that which relates to vaulting. Anyone who wants to learn the real history of our churches could not do better than give this most careful study. Whether Mr. Bond is correct in all his deductions may be doubtful, but his views are deserving of consideration, and give reasons for much that is met with in country churches that is to most quite unintelligible. We cordially thank Mr. Bond for his book, not merely because it is "a great picture-book" (some 1,200 illustrations entitle it to be called so), but because it puts the study of our church architecture in a new light, and, as we venture to think, the only true light. It makes the church tell the history of the parish, if it is only read aright, and emphasises the necessity—we had almost said the duty—of keeping all our old churches out of the hands of the restorer.

THE WATERLOO CUP.

AT twenty-four minutes to one o'clock last Friday afternoon Wilkinson delivered Hoprend and Dividend Deferred from the slips, and set them free to fight out the final course for the Waterloo Cup. Thirty-seven and three-fifths seconds later an outburst of cheering proclaimed that Mr. H. Hardy's fawn-coloured son of Forgotten Fashion and Heirloom had won the Greyhounds' Derby. In that wise was the issue won. With equal fortune in the slip, both dogs dashed



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THE WINNER, HOPREND.

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SLIPPING A BRACE.

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forward in pursuit of the flying hare; neck and neck they raced, but gathering speed as he went, Hoprend drew clear as they neared the quarry, and held the advantage on the turn. Going strongly on, he also scored the second turn, and for a moment looked like winning easily; but the white and black dog was holding grimly on, and, getting his opportunity at last, dashed into the fray with fierce determination. The hopes of his party were, however, doomed to disappointment, for Hoprend soon regained his place of pride, scored again, and almost "killed," but in the effort to do so stumbled and lost ground, and once more Dividend Deferred made a gallant bid for victory. As the hare came to the right, Hoprend swept in again for a couple of turns, then went a trifle wide, and again his adversary scored, only, however, to lose his place and let in Hoprend, who, taking possession of his hare, brooked no denial, went right away with her, and after scoring three or four good points ended a splendid trial with a brilliant kill.

To some extent the winner was undoubtedly favoured by fortune. In the first round he was drawn against Formula, and although he showed better speed in the run up, it was not without effort that he drew clear. Then when he held possession, and the bitch drew up to challenge, they cannoned, and he was swept clean off his legs; but the hare, swinging round sharply, gave him another point before she broke away, and let up Formula, who dashed in and killed at once, thereby extinguishing whatever chance she may have had of wiping off the points against her. Again, in the second round, after showing brilliant form and "using" his hare to perfection, he came down in attempting to kill, and let in Neolithic, who put herself out of the game by killing at once. In the third round he met Handsome Cup, who had had a terrible

gruelling in his course with First Hold. He was, moreover, fortunate in killing his hare as soon as he reached her, which he did three lengths in advance of his adversary. Then, again, in the fourth round he ran a bye, Mirko, who should have been his opponent, having been withdrawn after going away alone with a hare pointing for Lydiat Station. Even in the "bye" Hoprend's luck held good, for after leading in the run up and coming well round with his hare he let in Shake-a-Fut, who shot in and killed at once, so that after these two short and easy courses he was considerably fresher than the two opponents he had to meet in the fifth and deciding round. However, all's well that ends well, and if Mr. Hardy's dog is not quite a giant in the land, he is at all events a good dog, an honest dog, and a plucky one, with a bit better turn of speed than most of his opponents. His place in the list of Waterloo Cup winners has been fairly earned.

As regards this, the most recent of the Waterloo Cup meetings, it has been a most complete success from start to finish, the only adverse criticism possible being that some of the greyhounds themselves were hardly worthy of appearing in a Waterloo Cup entry. To Lord Sefton the thanks of the whole coursing world are due. None who know the work so well accomplished by Mr. J. Hartley Bibb, the hon. secretary, will deem him undeserving of a general vote of praise and thanks.

SHIRES AT DANESFIELD.

MR. R. W. HUDSON, who, like many other owners of large estates, has won for himself a great name as owner of pedigree stock, started a stud of Shire horses very soon after the acquisition of Danesfield.

It is a matter for congratulation to agriculturists generally, and more particularly to the farmers in the neighbourhood, that he was anxious to devote time and money to getting the best sires that could be procured, and allowing the farmers to use them at a purely nominal fee. The result of this is to be witnessed in the improvement of the cart-horses in the district. This is strongly marked, and the number of farmers who keep a few good breeding mares increases every year, as is shown by the large classes of mares and foals at the local shows, which are made up almost entirely of the offspring of the Danesfield Stud horses. It has been Mr. Hudson's aim from the commencement, when purchasing privately or at the Shire horse sales held in different parts of the country, to acquire big, sound horses, with good feet, bone, and feather, combined with good breeding. The wisdom of this has been clearly demonstrated by the success of this stud in the show-ring. It may be added that most of the horses shown by Mr. Hudson were bred at Danesfield. The first purchases were made in 1896, when several mares were bought from the leading tenant farmers in the Peterborough and Cambridge districts. These were meant to work on the farms. It was not until Lord Langatock's sale in 1897 that any Shires were purchased for the purpose of making an appearance in the show-ring, but at that sale Nyn Lively, the dam of Hendre Conqueror, was purchased. She was one of the right sort, wide, low, with good feet and feather, and an ideal brood mare. She was in foal at the time to Prince Harold, and produced a very good filly foal, which, with the mare, won many prizes at the leading shows. Other purchases were Dunsmore Fashion II., a great prize-winner in her day. She produced a chestnut colt foal, Danesfield Prince. He was exhibited several times as a yearling and two year old, when he won several firsts and a championship. Afterwards he was put to the stud, and sold at a high price as a four year old. He was the sire of many prize-winners, including that noted gelding Danesfield Tapir, second at the Shire Horse Show in London, 1904. In the spring of 1898, the real foundation of the Danesfield Stud was laid by the purchase from Mr. W. Richardson of Traitor (1540), a big bay horse on short legs, with an abundance of silky feather and a grand mover. Traitor was almost unbeaten in the show-ring, winning that year, among others, first Bath and West, first Wiltshire County, first and champion Royal Counties, and second Royal Lancashire. He was only beaten by Buscot Harold, who was twice champion at the London Show. After his show career he was used largely at the stud, and at the Danesfield Shire Sale, held on October 15th, 1902, most of the young stock sold were by him. He was the sire of many noted prize-winners, such as the gelding Danesfield Rebel, first in London in 1903, twice first at the Oxford County Show, and first at Peterborough. Danesfield Jim was also one of his progeny. He was first in London in 1904, and first at the Royal and Central Bucks. Danesfield Kingmaker was another great winner sired by Traitor, who was also the sire of Danesfield Barmaid, the mare that has been so successful in the hands of Sir Alexander Henderson. The next stud visited was that

of Earl Egerton of Tatton, where that afterwards-famous mare Tatton Tapestry, by Royal William II. out of a Royal Landy mare, was purchased as a yearling. She has proved a

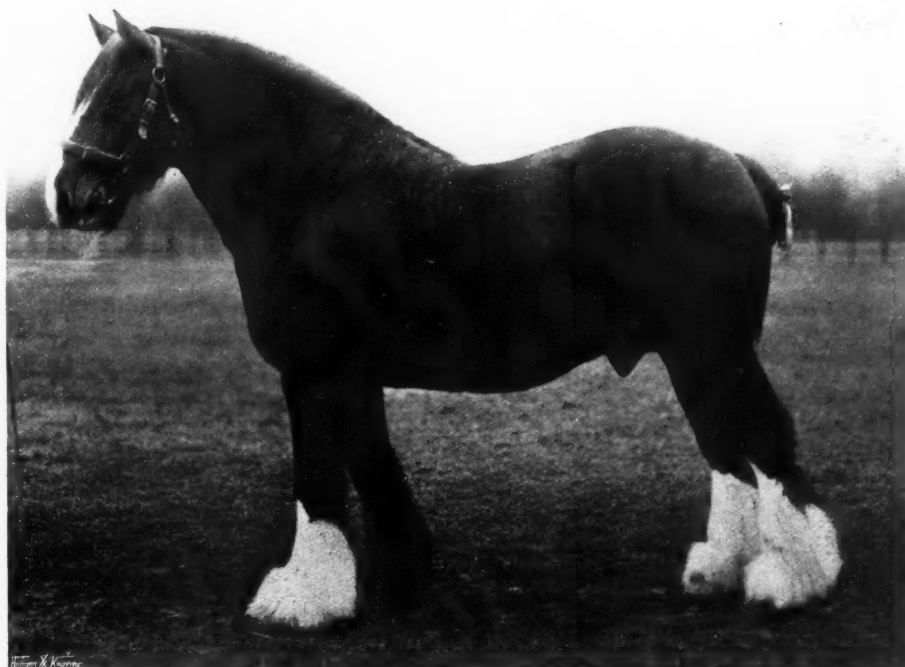


W. A. Rouch.

CELTIC.

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regular breeder, and has won upwards of forty first and championship prizes at the leading shows in England, including the London Shire Horse Show, the Royal Counties, and the Bath and West. Mares and fillies have also been purchased from the studs of the late Lord Wantage, Sir Alexander Henderson, Sir Walter Gilbey, Sir P. A. Muntz, Sir Oswald Mosely, Messrs.

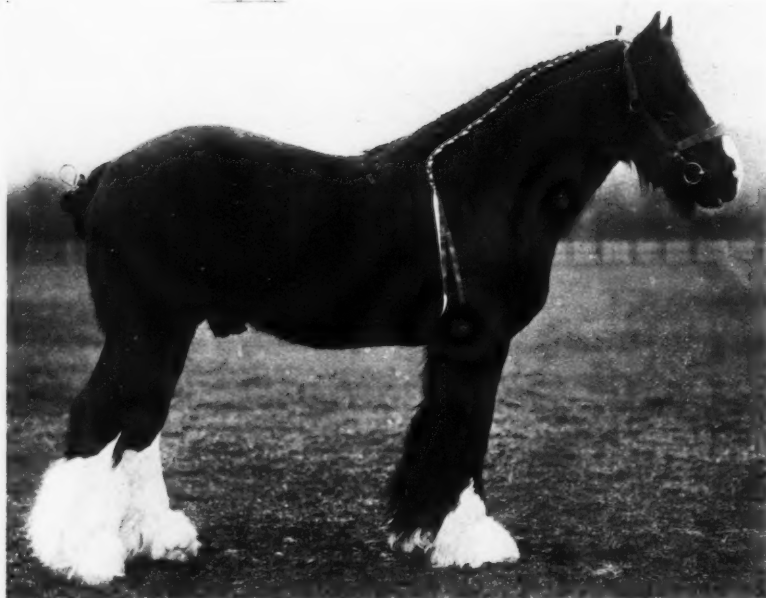


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DANESFIELD SPARK.

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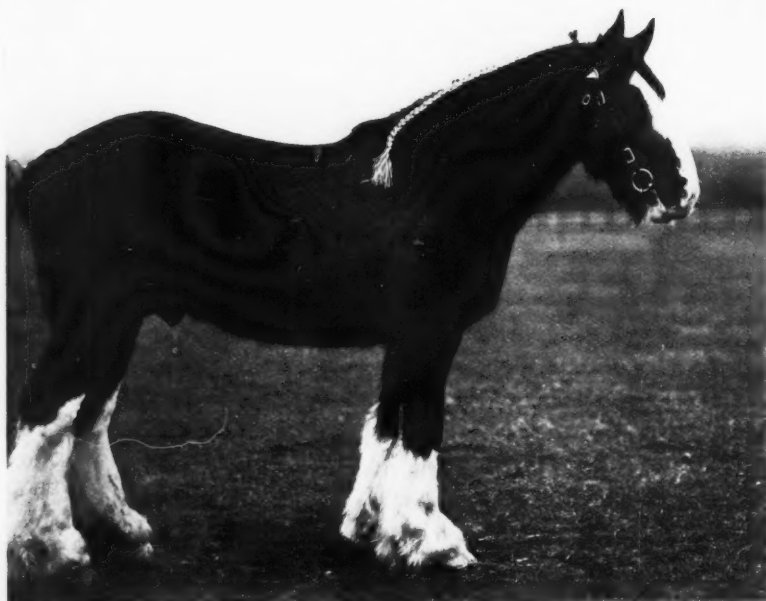
F. Griffin, W. Thompson, W. Whitehurst, and several other prominent breeders. It was found necessary, with the increasing demand both in the district and from a distance, to increase the number of stud horses, so in October, 1900, Mr. Hudson purchased that grand horse, Hendre Hydrometer, sire Prince Harold, dam Puckrup Folly, by Hydrometer, at Lord



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GRANGE CHIEF.

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DANESFIELD STONE WALL.

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BEACHENDON ROYAL HAROLD.

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Llangattock's sale. He was only shown once, when he was first and champion at the Royal Show at York. Since then he has been kept entirely for stud purposes, his first six foals selling at the Danesfield sale for over £60 each. This horse, we are sorry to say, died last week from enteritis. He was a great loss to the stud, but has left many valuable animals behind him. Other stud horses used at Danesfield besides those already mentioned are Beachendon Royal Harold, by Markeaton Royal Harold out of a Prince William mare. He is a big, upstanding horse, and a great prize-winner, and was let last year to the Winslow Shire Horse Society, leaving a very large percentage of mares in foal. Celtic, by Highland Chief, is also a great prize-winner, and is let again to the Tiverton Shire Horse Society to travel in Devon, where he left excellent results last year. Grange Chief, by Forest Chief out of a Regent mare, travelled the Slough, Windsor, Bracknell, and Wokingham districts. Stonewall Lad and Danesfield Spark are two other notable Shires in the stud. The latter travels round Shiplake, Theale, Reading, and Sonning. It will, therefore, be seen that Mr. Hudson covers a large district with his horses, and as they travel at a purely nominal fee, it must be of the greatest advantage to the neighbourhood, and helps to improve the horses of the district. Some of the results speak more eloquently than words of the influence exerted by this stud. For example, at the East Berkshire Show last year the championship prize for tenant farmers was won by a filly by Hendre Hydrometer. The championship gelding at the Henley and District Ploughing Match was out of a Danesfield mare sold to the breeder of the gelding. The championship mare or filly at the Bucks Ploughing Match and Association Show, 1905, and also winner of the Shire horse medal, was out of Danesfield Star, by Hendre Hydrometer. She was sold to a tenant farmer. Thus it is evident that the farmers are seeing more clearly every day how much better it pays to use a well-bred and sound sire. As a remarkable proof of this it may be noted that during last season nearly four hundred mares were served from Danesfield, in addition to the number in 1898. Evidently the district owes Mr. Hudson debt of gratitude for his enterprise. The success of the stud in the show-ring proves how world wide is its reputation. It has always been Mr. Hudson's aim to breed from nothing but the best and soundest horses on both sides, and the result has amply repaid him. At the first Danesfield Shire Sale, held on October 15th, 1902, the satisfactory average of £117 4s. 3d. was obtained, and it is probable that when the second draft sale takes place in November of the present year the results will be no less satisfactory. Many valuable specimens of the Shire horse will come under the hammer, and no doubt the foreigners who are beginning to realise the value of the English cart-horse will keep their eye on this important event, and try to carry some of the best animals across the water.

FROM THE FARMS.

BUTTER ADULTERATION.

LORD CARRINGTON has promised to appoint a Departmental Committee to enquire into this subject, and has, moreover, given the assurance that it will set to work at once. This will be good news to farmers, who have good reason to complain that butter is frequently adulterated after leaving their hands; but we hope that Lord Carrington's committee will take care to investigate the question of colouring matter also. It is not asserted that colouring matter need itself be noxious. We know that in the majority of cases it is not, but it is a clever device for concealing defects. As long as colouring matter is used it is almost impossible for the ordinary consumer to know what kind of butter he is purchasing. It may have the tint of the most beautiful Jersey butter, and still be made from milk of a most inferior cow. Probably, when it came from the churn it had no colour at all to speak of, and the colouring matter was added for the mere purpose of giving it a fallacious look of richness. No doubt customers have themselves to blame in part, because those who sell butter have long been aware of the fact that certain colours are favoured in certain districts. The shops in some parts of the country will not take butter unless it is straw-coloured; others like to see it of the same hue as the buttercup; and between these opposites there is every gradation of taste and tint. Those who supply the markets naturally make themselves aware beforehand of the colour that is thought to be the most

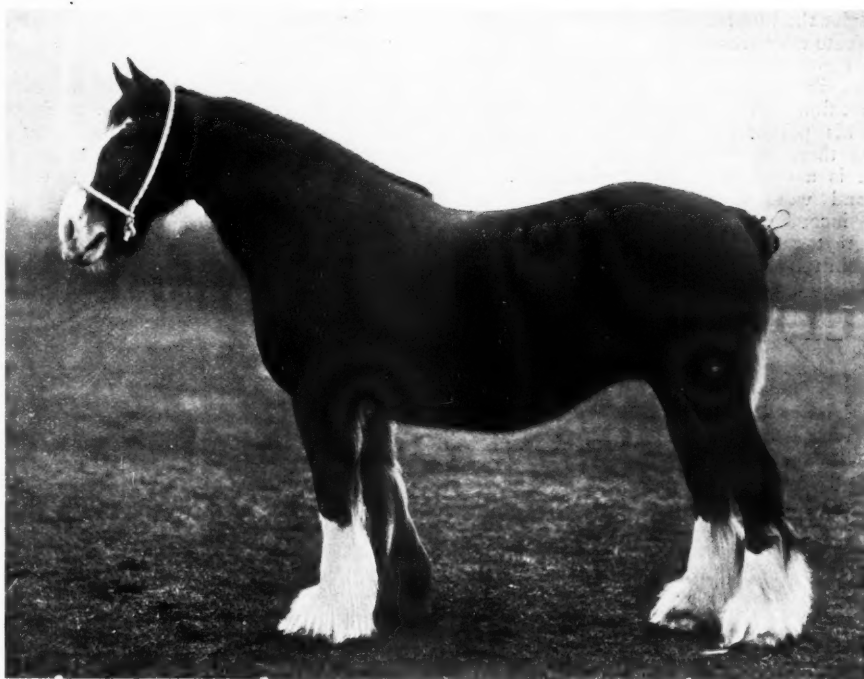
desirable, and impart it to their butter. This is done abroad as much as, and even more than, it is done in England, Danish butter being regularly prepared as regards colour to suit the market for which it is destined. Thus a thorough-going Bill would enforce the abstinence from using colouring matter by all those who are in the habit of sending dairy produce to English markets. Probably if that were done the result would cause some surprise to those who are accustomed to provide their household with 1s. per lb. factory butter.

MARCH PROSPECTS.

Seldom have the fields looked so dreary at this time of the year as they do in 1906. Going over some land in the Midlands on Saturday there did not seem to be any difference between the aspect of the country then and what it was in the middle of December. Not a blade of grass showed a sign of movement. The fields were all black, except where a pale-looking crop of winter wheat showed above the surface. This was very seldom, however, because the country is mainly a potato one, and, of course, potato land at this season is at its dreariest. Now, however, the teams should be out ploughing and making ready for the drills and setting. Beyond York lambing is still only beginning. Here and there one could see a fold with a few lambs in it, but for by far the majority of the flocks the season has still to arrive. Other kinds of stock seem to be as yet kept largely indoors, and this seemed the more appropriate, inasmuch as the air was biting cold and snow threatened all the day without falling in any quantity. It is on March, however, that the future depends, and perhaps its stormy entrance may prove of good omen for the year.

A BOOK OF THE WEEK.

THERE are few subjects more interesting than the history of tithes, and it is singular that while a huge library of books has been written to urge the payment of a tithe, not as an act of benevolence, but as the discharge of a duty, we do not know of a thorough presentation of the history of tithe-paying. Dr. Lansdale, in *The Sacred Tenth* (2 vols., S.P.C.K.), is more of the preacher than the historian. He writes like a gentle secluded scholar and a survival of earlier days whom one is glad to meet in the glare and dust of the twentieth century. These pages might have been addressed to a great Christian nation which had been guilty of backsliding—one that knew but neglected its duty. Not once does the author allude to the growing crowd outside the pale of the Church, whose faith in its truths has been undermined and who habitually neglect its observances. In town and country the same tale is told of increasing numbers whose lives are, practically speaking, Pagan. To shut one's eyes to this is idle. Since Darwin's time there has been a silent but great dropping away from old methods of thought, and in novels and plays we have of recent years seen the Christian legend represented as though it were no more than a myth of classic times. This fact deprives the statistics given by Dr. Lansdale of the force they would otherwise have possessed. He calculates that the average income in Great Britain is £40 a year, or a little under, and that of this sum 7s. 7½d. represents the average Englishman's giving. This is not a tenth of the tenth; but then we presume that secular benevolences are not included. Yet among the unbelievers there are pious-minded men and women, who, recognising a duty to humanity, give of their substance to establish libraries and endow colleges, to establish institutions and provide the people with parks and open spaces. The materials for calculating what private charity amounts to are not available, and no great importance can be attached to mere guesses. To go back sufficiently far is to find that tithe had its origin neither in



W. A. Rouch.

TATTON TAPESTRY.

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Jewish nor Christian institution. Offerings closely approximating to tithes in their character were carried to the temples of the Egyptian gods 2,000 or 3,000 years before the birth of Christ. Conquering kings gave a tenth of their spoil to the deities of Babylon. Professor Sayce indeed holds that the *Esrá* or tithe was a Babylonian institution. Cyrus paid tithes to Apollo and Diana of Ephesus. Those ancient sailors the Phœnicians used to give Hercules at Tyre a tenth of their profits till they waxed rich, and in their ease and plenty forgot to propitiate the gods. If Herodotus is to be credited, even women of ill-repute

paid tithe in ancient Greece. He mentions the case of a Thracian harlot, named Rhodopis, who brought a tenth of her gains to the shrine of Apollo at Delphi, and in the Greek anthology mention is made of a woman of the same class who vowed tithes of her gains to Venus. The object of citing so many cases is to prove that long before the Christian era it was a custom among the ancient Pagan nations to pay tithes. The history of tithe-paying is taken up at this point and carried through the book of Genesis. Cain brought the first-fruits of the ground to Jehovah, and Abel, firstlings of the flock and of the fat thereof. To-day practical interest centres on the Biblical sanction to tithe-paying as the cause of much legislation in mediæval Europe, and we need not follow Dr. Lansdale in his careful examination of it.

Among the early Christians of England, to pay tithe was deemed a great virtue. Thus the Venerable Bede tells us that Bishop Eadbert, the successor of Cuthbert at Lindisfarne, "gave to the poor a tithe not only of his beasts, but all his corn, and fruits of trees, and of his garments," also according to the law in Saxon England tithe laws were passed "for the Glory of God, the honour of the royal majesty and the benefit of the Commonwealth." Edward the Confessor, about A.D. 1050, passed a law which began by stating that of "all corn the tenth sheaf is due to God and is therefore to be paid." The Norman Conquest left the right of tithes in England on as firm a foundation as they found it, and frequent mention of their being paid is made in Domesday Book. The next point of supreme interest in the history of tithes is the reign of Henry VIII. As our author says: "The English people then, at the beginning of the sixteenth century, may in a very real sense be said to have been able to claim the description of a nation of tithe-payers. Farmers who cultivated the land and reared cattle paid to God's service, the cause of religion, and the relief of poverty a tenth of their increase in the form of prædial tithes; while in the towns, merchants and those earning wages paid a tenth of their profits as personal tithes." A very different state of affairs prevails to-day. About half of the prædial tithes are paid to laymen, and personal tithes are practically unknown. Dr. Lansdale traces much of the present confusion to the "wrong-doing and injustice of that leader of Church robbers, Henry VIII." Of the tithes and property placed at his disposal by the dissolution of the monasteries a small portion was allotted to the foundation of some half-dozen bishoprics and some few colleges and schools, but a great deal went into his own purse and into the purses of his tools. Of the fifty-three laymen who signed the letter from Parliament to the Pope urging him to sanction the divorce of Queen Katherine, thirty-six received an aggregate of 376 grants of tithes. To incidents such as these our author traces many disastrous effects on the Church. For example, he says:

Another evil bequest from our reformation times is the prevalence of small English benefices of which there are said to be 5,907 with an average net income of only £132 a year, and of these nearly 1,500 are of the net average value of only £67 a year.

We confess to have read this book with an object differing much from that for which it was written. Dr. Lansdale is pious and religious in his aim, which is to stir up English people to a livelier sense of their duty in regard to paying tithes. Many will read it, however, in order to strengthen the case for present-

day reform. If we consider the number of small incomes in the Church, and how inadequate they are to keep up the position of the incumbents, it will be felt still more deeply how unjust have been recent fluctuations in the value of tithes. Naturally enough our author did not find that the commutation effected in 1837 was germane to his purpose, and he therefore passes it by with little more than an allusion. From his point of view we can see it is a comparatively small matter. If every citizen in England were compelled to pay a tithe on the whole of his income, the amount yielded by the merchant princes and great capitalists would be so immense as to dwarf utterly that from the land; but this idea does not come

within the range of practical politics at a time when a great many of those concerned acknowledge the authority of no Christian body, and only a comparatively small number are adherents to the Church of England. But the incidence of tithe is still a serious matter for the land, and the manner of its collection is no longer just or fair. The absurdity of tithing pastoral land by a septennial average of corn prices is one so gross that it scarcely needs pointing out. Moreover, now that commerce has usurped the place agriculture used to hold in the economy of England, it is illogical that land should have alone to support the Church when that duty is equally incumbent on those engaged in commerce.

LORD WENLOCK'S CHEAP COTTAGES.

AMONG our great land-owners, Lord Wenlock has long been known for his profound sympathy with the wishes and needs of his tenants, and for his desire to meet the requirements of the labourers on his estate. Much interest therefore attaches to the experiments in cottage-building which he has been carrying out at Esrick in Yorkshire. But before dealing at length with the type of cottage which has found favour there, it may be well to give a general sketch of the district, especially as the facts collected there must have an important bearing on the legislation which it is believed Parliament will soon begin to undertake. The district is not the most fertile in England, as witness the fact that the average land is about 26s. per acre. Further, although a scheme is on foot to carry a light railway through it, the traffic accommodation is not such as would suit those who desire to send their produce daily to market. In the face of these facts it is unnecessary to say that there is little desire in the district for the establishment of small holdings meant for the cultivation of fruit and garden produce, such as flourish in the very



NO. 1. COTTAGE.—FRONT ELEVATION.

different counties of Kent and Worcestershire. Nor, as far as we can gather, is there any great commercial basis, and the wild speculation that prevailed is at an end. The labourer in this part of Yorkshire, then, would not know what to do with the small holding that belonged to himself. He does not possess capital enough to stock and work it, besides which he has no ambition to be permanently tied to the soil. Over a greater part of the country than is generally supposed this is the objection that has been raised to taking advantage of the provisions of the Small Holdings Act now in existence. Experience has shown that in bad years a small holder not having capital behind him is very often driven



NO. 1. COTTAGE.—BACK VIEW.

desire on the part of the labourers to acquire land. The truth is that it would be next to impossible to derive a livelihood from a small ownership here. The principal crop cultivated is potatoes, and after the unnatural inflation that occurred two or three years ago, the prices have now dropped to what we may call a



NO. 2. COTTAGE.—FRONT ELEVATION.

to borrow, and he finds that paying interest is as inconvenient in every way as paying rent, while the building societies to which he very often has recourse in his difficulties are unlike the landlord in this way, that whereas the latter at a time of stress is able to make some allowance to his tenant, the former, working by rule of thumb, are almost compelled to enforce payment. Again, the peasant proprietor has only gained one point when he has secured the land. It is necessary for him to build a house or acquire one, and this expense would either swallow up what little capital he had at his disposal or lay him under an obligation that would take the best part of a lifetime to get rid of. There is, then, no desire in this district of Yorkshire on the part of the peasant to become a proprietor. He would, however, like very much to become the tenant of a small holding; and, perhaps, it may be as well for us to try and define what he means by the expression, since the phrase "a small holding" is elastic in its meaning, and has a special significance in each individual district.

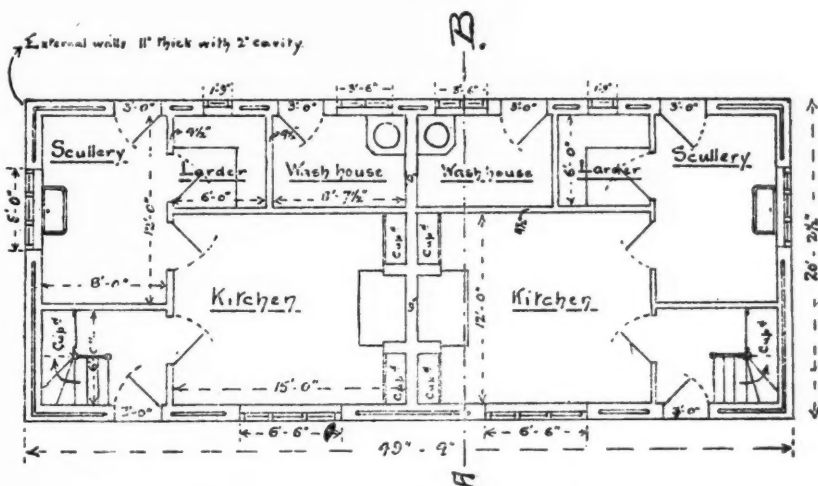
Where market gardening is to be attempted, five acres might be more than sufficient for a man's requirements, and often in the best dairy counties ten or twelve acres might yield a livelihood to him and to his household; but it is safe to say that on agricultural land of only average quality, and with no particular facilities for transport, twenty acres would not be sufficient for a tenant to live on. There is, nevertheless, a great demand for tenancies of from five to twenty acres, mainly on the part of those who have other avocations. In the villages it is often found that the blacksmith hires such a holding, while the village innkeeper is usually ready to take another. Practically speaking, those who can carry on a separate occupation are willing enough to add to their earnings the produce of as much land as the family can work. Now as to the conditions of rental. The principal one on which the labourer would like to insist is fixity of tenure. He wishes, as long as his rent is paid, to enjoy undisturbed possession, so that he may reap the benefit of the improvements effected. With fixity of tenure he naturally couples compensation for improvements. The question of rental is not likely to cause much friction. It is quite understood that, if large farms were to be subdivided, the landlord would be entitled to charge more per acre for a small holding than he would for a large one; but, on his side, another important question arises. It is quite evident that on the new holding it would be necessary to erect houses and outbuildings. In some cases roads would have to be made, and, in fact, there would have to be



NO. 2. COTTAGE.—BACK ELEVATION.

a considerable outlay of capital. No doubt there are facilities for borrowing the money required at what may be called a reasonable rate of interest, 4 per cent., we believe; but if the landlord is obliged to lay out more capital on his land, it is clear that he has the right to expect a fair return from it. These, then, are the salient facts of the situation, and it is to be hoped that the Government will take them into account before producing their new Small Holdings Bill. From the declarations of many of their followers we can easily see that the details of the situation have not been very closely studied. There

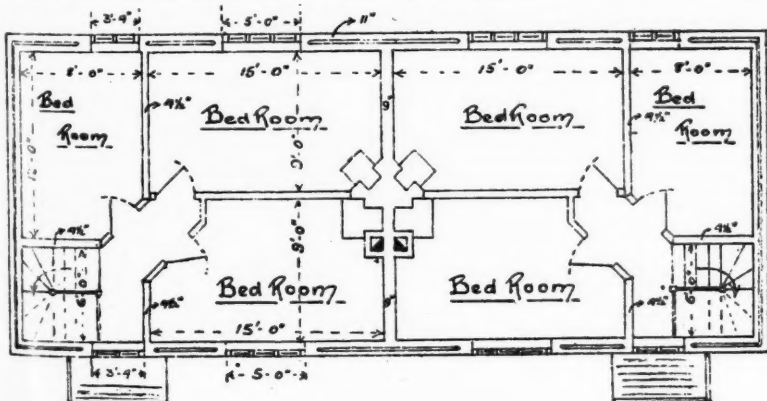
is an amiable aspiration to knit the labourer more closely to the soil, but this, in itself, is of little avail unless those who advocate any definite measure will take steps to acquire the practical knowledge that would make the Act at once just and workable. In this connection it should be pointed out that the cry of rural depopulation is not by any means so keen as it was a few years ago. The rural districts do not at the present moment complain of any dearth of labourers, which



GROUND PLAN OF STANDARD COTTAGE.

seems to show that the conditions of town and country interact upon each other. A very large number of those who migrate from the country villages become bricklayers' labourers in town, and no doubt the long-continued depression in the building trade has not only discouraged this movement, but induced many who formerly left the fields for the town to return to their earlier homes. Probably if the present signs of recovery of commercial prosperity in the country were to be fulfilled, the old cry that the labourer was leaving the villages would be removed. At present, however, it is in abeyance.

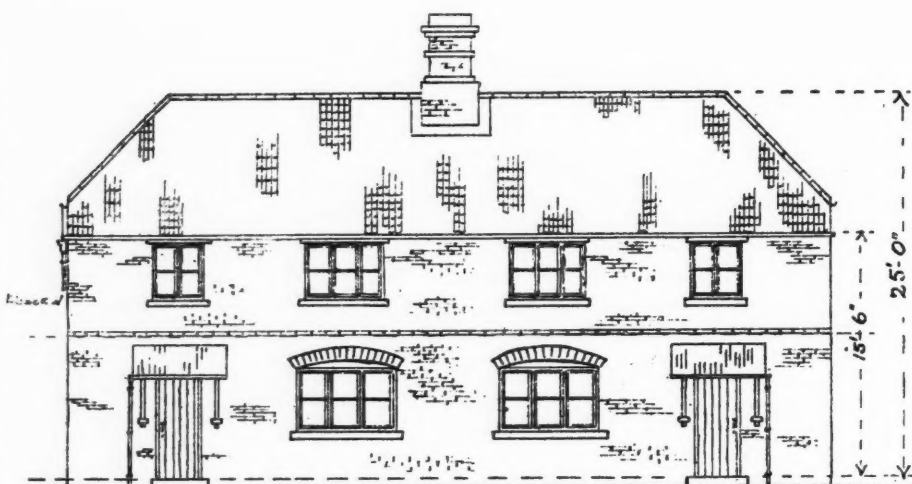
In view of the situation that has arisen it becomes of the highest importance to consider by what means adequate cottage accommodation can be provided for the labourers. Our readers need not be reminded of the difficulties that lie in the way. Despite all the talk that there has been of a cottage for £150 the problem is still, in the opinion of practical men, unsolved. Yet Lord Wenlock has come very near to doing so. The plan we show is that of what may be called the standard labourer's cottage on the estate. It is a cottage, as will be seen, that approximates very much in character to the little villa, and certainly it is a great advance as far as comfort is concerned upon the old dwelling-places of the labouring poor in the country. The cottage of which a plan is given has not yet been constructed, but we had the pleasure of looking over the other cottages, and so obtained the opportunity of seeing what this one



BEDROOM PLAN OF STANDARD COTTAGE.

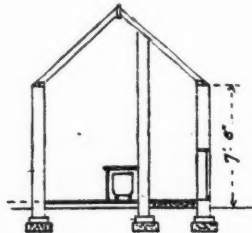
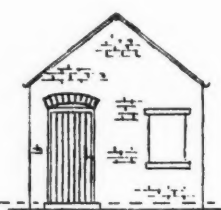
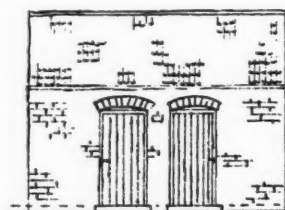
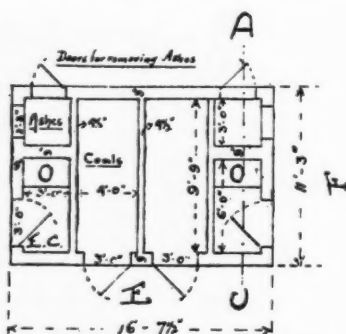
would be like. Outside they are square-built, substantial-looking dwellings, almost divested of anything in the shape of ornament. It has not been found practicable to erect a cottage which at one and the same time would be practical and still add to the amenities of the estate. The cottages in this neighbourhood, as a matter of fact, are let by the farmers to their tenants at a rent of half-a-crown a week, and the landlord hands them over to his tenant, expecting for himself only the inadequate return of 5 per cent. upon his outlay.

Under these circumstances cheapness is a prime requisite, as at the present rate of agricultural wages it is impossible for the tenants to pay anything like the rent which would be expected from them in a town, and this point it may be well to deal with at once. The two houses which form the subject of the first photograph were built with gin. walls—it ought to be said there were no building bye-laws to hamper work—and cost £307 13s. 6d.; but there were extras for draining, etc., costing £17 8s. 6d., so that the total amounted to £325 2s., including everything needful for permanent occupation. The original contract price was £298, and the additional sum was incurred for adding four cupboards in the kitchen, and by fixing White's Patent Diamond Steam Exhausts over each copper to prevent steam from coming into the house. The house inside is extremely convenient. There is on the ground floor a scullery with a copper and other conveniences, and a cool larder. The kitchen looks extremely comfortable, with a grate



FRONT ELEVATION.

this pair of cottages and outhouses was £317 3s. 6d., and the extras for sanitary drains and fencing and quick planting amounted to £13 6s., bringing the total cost to £330 9s. 6d. The provision for water supply is not included, because the farm on which the cottages were built also needed a supply, and a well was sunk for joint purposes. The plan we give is the one Lord Wenlock's agent considers to be the best, and one that is worth adopting as the standard labourer's cottage for the estate. The two can be built for £327, with drains, fencing, etc., as extras, which would bring the total up to about £345 or £350, inclusive of everything. It ought to be mentioned that advantage was taken of



Plan of Outbuildings. — Elevation E — Elevation F — Section C.D.

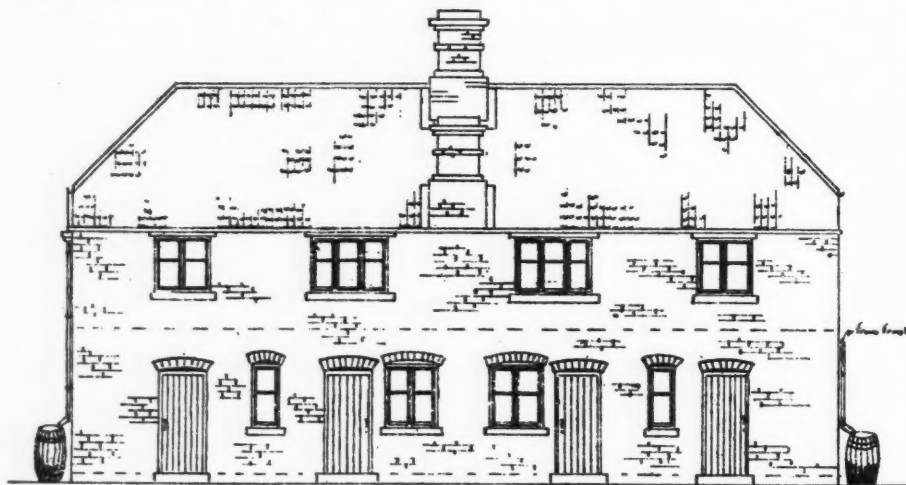
that evidently gives pleasure to the mistress of the house, and is a great improvement on the open fireplace which used to be common in this class of cottage. In addition, there is an excellent wash-house on the first floor. On the upper floor there are three comfortable bedrooms, two of which have fireplaces. Each has a separate entrance. Joined to the cottages there is a fair-sized garden with the necessary outbuildings. It will be seen even from this bald description that, especially as the water is laid on, the cottage is calculated to reduce the household work to a minimum. The second cottage resembles the first, with the exception that it was built with rin. walls, having a 2in. cavity and casement windows. The cost of

such facilities for building as were afforded by the estate. In all cases the bricks were delivered on the site by the owner, and were supplied from the Estate Brickyard and charged to the contractor at the rate of 24s. a thousand, which must be considered cheap. They were kiln-burnt and machine-cut bricks. The roofs are covered with plain red French tiles at 55s. a thousand. Here no great bargain was effected, as the best hand-made tiles can be had for 42s. a thousand. Each house has a proper damp course of asphalt. The windows in No. 1 are Yorkshire slide windows, but in No. 2 and No. 3 they are casement sashes. All doors to the bedrooms are ledged braced batten doors. Lord Wenlock may be congratulated on the result of his experiment.

It shows that if a Small Holdings Bill were passed through Parliament it would be possible to provide the new occupants with houses the cost of which, though it exceeded £150, need not be extravagant.

SOUTHERN CHALK STREAMS.

A STATEMENT appeared in a contemporary lately to the effect that there was a great slump in the letting of fishing waters in Southern England at the present moment. But should anyone take this expression of opinion literally, and endeavour to rent a really good bit of trout water in the South of England, or in Derbyshire, he will find, it is safe to prophesy, that he will have to pay as high for it as at any time during the past ten years, if, indeed, he succeeds in finding one really worth the having. When one is asked £100 a rod for three miles of water for the season, or £25 for one rod only for two fields (under half a mile



BACK ELEVATION.

for the month of July, and on many waters the price approximates nearer £50 than £30 per rod, there cannot be much the matter with the letting value of such properties. The fact is, where preservation is well done, and the natural conditions are favourable, the lessee's motto is "J'y suis, j'y reste." Too often, however, an owner, after some years, grows stingy about the upkeep, grasps greedily at an offered higher rent, and then lets to tenants who retire regularly in disgust at the end of each season, until the water gets a bad name, and the rent falls below that which he originally despised. Moreover, the satisfied permanent tenant was more likely to be a good sportsman and a pleasant neighbour. He would as often as not share expenses incurred in stocking, could he but be sure of reaping where he had sown, and spent a good deal of money one way and another in the neighbourhood.

The fisherman will hardly make much change in his tackle this year. Rods in whole and split cane are growing lighter, and we have every reason to believe now that English makers will be able to supply 4oz. and 5oz. rods of this material that will do the work that 8oz. and 10oz. ones were alone held capable of doing, till the best American makers showed us to the contrary some years ago.

In connection with our own native trout let owners of waters think, and, as a great orator once said on a memorable occasion, "think well, think wisely, think not for the present, but for the years to come," before trying experi-

ments with strange breeds in waters which are the natural home of salmo fario. What better fish can they expect than one of our bonnie 1½-pounders, in all his williness, vigour, and beauty of crimson spot and golden fins; game fighter, good eating. How are you going to better him? On one point there seems to be a growing consensus of opinion, and this is the right time of the year to give utterance to it. Weed cutting and bush trimming are an evil at best, necessary on many waters, but often overdone. It all arises from the enormously increased value of trout-fishings. Every inch of river has to be made fishable, so that more rods can be accommodated, and the result is the trout are harried to death. It is the writer's firm belief that this more than any other one cause is at the bottom of fish ceasing to rise freely, and the private owner with, say, a mile to two miles of fishing will be well advised to remain content with things as they are, even if a quarter of a mile be impossible to fish. It is not merely acting as a stew for replenishing the rest, it is breeding up trout that rarely see a fly, and among whom gut shyness has not become an inherited instinct. On the Kennet a miller made a very striking observation last year; said he, "This water never has been the same for trout since they first put a bit o' string into it." By this he meant the netting of coarse fish, and it must be remembered that netting implies weed cutting. Kennet folk are, we know, at a loss to remedy the scarcity of rising fish, and this remark seems well worth their consideration.

SHOOTING.

PRESENT TASKS OF THE PARTRIDGE-KEEPER.

THE author of that excellently practical work, "Partridge Driving," has been kind enough to jot down, out of his experience, the hints that follow in reference to the partridge-keeper's chief duties at this very important moment of the shooting year. The point which appears to us perhaps of especial importance is that which he makes when insisting on the value of change and variety in the methods employed by the keeper in dealing with the vermin. It is a point especially to be observed because so often neglected, even by the best of keepers.—ED.]

WE are now beginning to hear and read of the very satisfactory way in which partridges have paired, and of the scarcity of the lots of three to be seen. The same thing has been said and written at this time of year ever since we can remember, yet this fact alone forms a very unsound basis on which to forecast next season's prospects. If it could be said that the number of pairs to be seen all over England was above the average, there would be more reason for being satisfied with the news and hopeful for the future. The most accurate way of discovering what number of birds is left for stock on a given area at this time of year can only be employed if certain statistics have been kept. If the nests were properly looked for last year, and the number of those found is known, it is easy to make a fair estimate of the number of old birds alive at that time.

If, also, a strict account was kept of the numbers of young and old birds respectively killed during the past shooting season, no great knowledge of arithmetic is required to show what stock would be left to breed this year, supposing there were no casualties. Unfortunately, before the nesting season these casualties have become very much more numerous than is generally supposed. One very fruitful cause of wastage in our stock would be the more easily understood if it was realised that some birds which never come to hand are wounded during nearly every drive. It may fairly be said that the past season was below the average on heavy land, above it on light, and exceptionally good in a few districts, although it is doubtful if a very large proportion of young birds was killed anywhere in the Southern and Midland Counties. A reference to the writer's game book for the past season shows that the proportions ran from half a young bird to one old one on heavy land in Essex—where even if no birds had been shot at all it must be doubtful whether the previous breeding stock would have been left—to three and three-quarter young to one old on one of the most prolific estates in Norfolk. The best proportion on land which might fairly be termed heavy was two and a-half young to one old. These statistics, which were only kept on estates where no birds had been hand reared, seem to point to the fact that owners of heavy land may find themselves short of stock unless they shoot their ground very lightly. If the deficit has not been made good with a supply of Hungarians, the only thing to be done is to make the insufficient material go as far as possible.

February and March are two very important months to a keeper whose duty it is to look after a partridge beat. During this period most keepers are kept hard at work killing rabbits. If their attentions are confined to the fences, and the importance of stopping up every hole they come across is impressed upon them, a lot of good is being done, and no doubt a certain number of rats and hedgehogs form part of their daily bag. It must not, however, be forgotten that March is the best month in the whole year for trapping every kind of ground vermin. At this time of year cats begin to leave the cottages in search of young rabbits, hedgehogs move from their winter quarters, and, in fact, every sort of vermin appears on ground which was apparently clear of it two months before. Under these circumstances it

often happens that a keeper is lulled into a sense of false security, and, under the impression that there is no vermin to catch, does little or no trapping, instead of nipping the invasion in the bud. In no walk of life is it more important to avoid getting into a groove than in that of a keeper. The art of trapping is a case in point, yet how often do we see a trap set in the same place, and baited in the same way year after year. Is it likely that an experienced cat which has barely escaped, possibly not altogether scatheless, from such a trap will eventually be caught in it? The truth is that a keeper who has been for some time on a beat is apt to get into a regular routine, in which he loses the keenness and power of initiative which he probably showed during his first year. Nothing is more fatal to success on a partridge beat. Here there is little or no work which can be done by rule of thumb, and a man must be using his wits and powers of observation continually. The death-roll among vermin is generally largely increased during a new keeper's first year on a beat. This is partly to be accounted for by the incentive provided by a new place, and partly because the stranger employs methods which differ from those of his predecessor, and are consequently unknown to his victims. How then is a keeper on a partridge beat to be kept up to the mark? This can only be accomplished by his master taking a personal interest in the man's work, by suggesting to him fresh ideas, and by encouraging in him an emulative and, possibly, even a competitive spirit. A first-rate partridge-shoot in England where the owner does not take a great interest himself in his keeper's duties would be hard to find, although there are an enormous number of estates only waiting for that interest to be taken in order to spring into prominence. To those who wish to have as many partridges as possible next year it is humbly suggested that now is the time to lay the foundation for a good hatching season. Hedgehogs, stoats, and weasels are leaving the woods and running the fences. As the stacks are threshed rats will be going out into the fields. These and many other kinds of vermin should be killed before they have had time to breed. Many well-preserved estates are bounded by others on which no attempt is made to keep down the vermin. This is particularly hard on the keeper whose beat adjoins the unpreserved land; but if he arms his boundary well with traps and pays particular attention to fences leading directly from big woods, his walks round the nests during the first fortnight in June, when birds should be hatching, are likely to be more pleasant than would otherwise be the case. However well situated a keeper's beat may be, he is never safe from the periodical visits of vermin, and cannot trust even the most innocent-looking cat. The case of a beautiful long-haired Persian was an instance in support of this statement. This cat was always to be seen asleep during the daytime in a certain cottage, and there seemed to be no doubt, judging by its general appearance, and apart from the protestations of its owner, that it was no poacher, and orders were consequently issued that the cat should be given one chance if it happened to be caught. A few days after the order was given that cat was caught two miles from its home in a big wood, where it had established a regular game larder, and owing to a case of mistaken identity, excusable under the circumstances, it never even had its one chance. Owners of cats often think they have a grievance against keepers, which has before now led to some ill-feeling. The remedy is in the owners' hands, and can be applied in the form of a collar and chain attached to their pets every night.

It is too early to venture on a forecast as to whether the nesting season will be early or late, but if late a trial of what has been called the "Euston" method (though never adopted, for

partridges, at least, at Euston) can be recommended, whereby a number of birds may be hatched a fortnight earlier than would be the case under ordinary circumstances. There is no doubt that in nine years out of ten the early-hatched birds do best, but apart from this the so-called "Euston" system, and modifications thereof, which readily present themselves, will be found to be of great value on all land which, from one cause or another, is not best fitted for producing partridges. Failure with the French system seems to be the general verdict, nor is it used in France to nearly the same extent as we were led to suppose on its introduction here. The writer has been able to do nothing with the "unattached cock" system, but others seem to have fared better. After all, whether any of the dodges for assisting Nature are used or not, our common object must be to get the eggs hatched, and there is every reason to be confident that nothing but bad weather can prevent our attaining that object provided that everything humanly possible is done to ensure success. Unfortunately, it is little enough that can be done for young birds after they are hatched, but the writer was last year indebted to a friend for a plan which saves many lives when mowing is being done, and may not be generally known. It consists in starting in the middle of the clover and grass fields and cutting outwards instead of from the outside inwards. This is, of course, easily managed on land in hand, and most tenants will adopt it if properly approached. The advantages are so obvious as to need no explanation.

C. A.

THE PREVENTION OF POACHING.

AMONGST other useful hints the latest report of the East Anglian Game Protection Society gives the names of those importers of foreign partridges whom the society believes to be most trustworthy. In one of the cases in which the society succeeded in getting a conviction, the report records that "the remarkable points were the large number of eggs taken, 617, the vigilance of the police, and the conviction being due to invisible ink." The reference to "invisible ink" means that the eggs were marked with a solution which became visible only when treated in a certain way, and thus gave the poacher no evidence that he was stealing a marked article. But the report might have drawn attention to a further "remarkable point," namely, the consummate impudence of the man who was convicted of the offence and whom we yet find a month or two later applying for a renewal of his licence as a game dealer. The renewal, naturally, was refused, but at a cost of £10 to the funds of the society. A less satisfactory feature is that in some instances a perverted local view of the points at issue prevented the offender's conviction.

DISEASE AMONG HARES.

During the last few years there has appeared among the hares on several of the large estates in North-East Lancashire a disease which is giving owners and their agents considerable trouble and expense, besides interfering seriously with sport. So far as can be gathered, the condition is one few keepers or sportsmen are familiar with, although tradition speaks of similar outbreaks in other parts. The disease, which, from the nature and distribution of its lesions, seems to be of venereal origin, has the following characteristics: In all cases there appears, either around the anus or on the lips and nose, an ulcerating scab, which varies considerably in extent and appearance. In early cases, and in those where the disease is of a less-severe type, the lesions might easily be passed over unnoticed; but in severe cases, the affected parts are destroyed and eaten away, the animal presenting a most pitiful sight. The ulceration or scabs are seldom found in other situations than those mentioned, and in animals living under natural conditions the internal organs have always been found healthy. The diseased hares become very thin and weak, and are quite useless for sport or table. Mr. Strangeways of Cambridge has, during the last few weeks, been engaged in making an examination of the diseased animals, and he reports that it is of an infective nature, and caused by a micro-organism. Without going into details, this organism is found in all cases of the disease, and healthy hares have been inoculated with successful results. We are giving these particulars in order to warn those of our readers interested in ground game that the outbreak has occurred, and also to ask that a close watch shall be kept on estates where hares are plentiful. We venture to ask our readers to make enquiries among their keepers and sporting friends, and if they can obtain any information bearing on the subject, to communicate at once with

Mr. Strangeways at the Pathological Laboratory, Cambridge, as information on the distribution and origin of the disease is much wanted. Later on we hope to give a more complete account of the disease and its history.

THE ARMY RIFLE—ITS DEFECTS.

In connection with the subject of miniature rifles and rifle-shooting generally for civilians, to which we propose to devote considerable attention in the future, it may not be unprofitable to consider the weapon now used in the Army. Concerning this arm, a correspondent, who is himself well known as an expert rifle-shot, writes as follows: "All I can say of the present service rifle is that it is a conglomeration of parts, with no sense of order or reason in the assembling of them. It is, as you are well aware, a .303 bore, the rifling turns to the left, the fore-sight is fitted on crooked, in other words, it is cast off to the left. The magazine is a flimsy tin construction; the platform of the same is actuated by springs, which have to bring each cartridge in its turn to the level of the chamber. These springs frequently go wrong, and many a jam takes place in quick firing. The breech mechanism is also rather peculiar. It consists of a bolt with a knob. This bolt has to be turned up and drawn back, then a cartridge is placed on the platform, the bolt is shot home and turned down, and the rifle is then ready for firing. The rifle is clumsy in its construction. The left hand, which supports and steadies it, cannot get a comfortable hold of the stock, owing to its excessive width. The barrel soon gets overheated, and a protection called a 'hand guard' has to be supplied. The cordite explosive leaves a species of acid deposit in the barrel, and great care has to be exercised in keeping it clear. So corrosive is the action of the deposit, that if left to itself the shooting of a barrel would be completely ruined in less than a week."

ITS MERITS.

The same correspondent continues, "There are, however, some good points about the peculiar weapon which the combined wisdom of those in authority has ordained for the use of our troops. To begin with, seven carefully-aimed shots can easily be got off inside of 30sec., a performance of which no other rifle has been capable. The trajectory compares favourably with that of other military rifles, and as the bore is smaller, so the ammunition is lighter, and therefore more of it can be carried by the soldier. It shoots well, when properly handled, up to 1,200yds. The recoil is nothing to speak of, and in the hands of a skilled marksman, who has become accustomed to the peculiarities of the weapon, a score of 100 out of a possible 105 is by no means uncommon."

Without perhaps entirely endorsing our correspondent's opinion as to the demerits of the rifle now in use in the Army, we can, at all events, so far agree with him as

regards the "putting together" of the rifle and its construction as a whole. There is no doubt whatever that more than one of our leading gunmakers could have designed and manufactured a better and handier weapon if they had been given the opportunity to do so. Moreover, it certainly does seem to be somewhat in the nature of an anomaly that what is, or should be, the latest and highest development of a ballistic weapon should be so constructed that it embodies a fault which has to be corrected by a most unusual arrangement of the sights. After all, these are but details, inconvenient as they may be; but the sting of our correspondent's letter lies in the fact that he states deliberately that "in quick firing the action frequently jams." This is a most serious accusation, and coming as it does from a man who, to our knowledge, is accustomed to fire many rounds from this very rifle himself, and to command numbers of men who have to use it in practice, the subject should certainly receive the serious consideration of those who are responsible for the issue of this weapon to the Army.

It does not require much effort of imagination to realise what the consequences of "jamming" might be on the field of battle. During the Zulu War it happened that in the heat of an action and at the most critical moments, the action of the Martini-Henry rifle, which was then in use in the Army, "jammed," in consequence of the levers being too short to force the cartridge-cases out of the chamber. The fault was afterwards remedied by longer levers being fitted to the rifle, but before this was done many of our soldiers had lost their lives owing to the faulty construction of the weapon provided by the Government. Should such a state of affairs again prevail, a heavy responsibility would undoubtedly lie upon the shoulders of the military authorities; and we think that no test should be left untried to ascertain beyond all doubt whether the weapon with which our troops are armed might fail them in their hour of need. It is probable that before long improvements will be effected in the weapon used for military purposes; but whatever the rifle may be which is adopted for public service, Lord Roberts has pointed out the path to follow, and the use of the rifle should become part and parcel of the education of an Englishman.



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WALKING ROUND AFTER THE BIG DAY. "COUNTRY LIFE."